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SOCIALISM

CHAPTER I

PRELIMINARY

It is not my purpose in these pages either to discuss the history of Socialism nor to investigate the condition of the working or lower classes, since both these subjects have been already sufficiently dealt with by others.[1] My object rather is to examine the principles and policy propounded by the advocates of Socialism; and in doing this, as well as in my statement of what I find these are, and in my argument against the Socialist position, I shall endeavour to avoid all ambiguity of phrase and all matter of debate.

Socialism, it will at once be allowed, is one of the greatest questions, if not *the* greatest, of the day. Its ramifications are so extensive, its roots strike so deep, so far, its claims are so vast, that probably there will not be many dissentient voices among the thoughtful, and those playing their part upon the public stage of Time, if Socialism is said to be the greatest question of the day; for the subjects it deals with are infinitely various, the interests it attacks momentous, the feelings

[1] Professor Flint's "Socialism;" Rae's "Contemporary Socialism;" Graham's "Socialism, New and Old;" Kirkup's "History of Socialism;" Laveleye's "Socialism of To-day;" and many others.

it arouses and opinions it appeals to intensely cherished; its organisation is so perfect that its messages, multitudinously delivered, are co-extensive with civilisation; and its determination and its hopes are so vigorous and audacious as to seem immitigable.

For what are the subjects it embraces and the interests it attacks? Private Property, Land, Wealth, Capital, Agriculture, Commerce, Labour, Production, Distribution, Demand, Supply, Competition, Machinery, Rent, Profits, Interest, Peace, War, Government, Law, the Civil and Criminal Codes, Freedom of Contract, Class, Patriotism, Religion, Morality, Marriage, the Family, Justice, Liberty, Education, Character, Taste, Virtue, Vice, Crime, Individual Development, Individual Enterprise, Exploration, Invention; in short, every interest which appeals to the affections and relates to the progress and prosperity of the human race.

It is not too much to say that the generally accepted ideas and opinions, various and remote as they may be from each other in their forms, concerning all and each of these, and probably of innumerable other questions dear in some form or other to the heart of every one of us, Socialism antagonises and struggles to subvert. I say "dear to the heart of every one of us," not forgetting that Socialism inferentially postulates that all the classes have feelings different from and entirely opposed to the feelings of the Socialist's one class—the Proletariat; that "the Haves" love themselves, private property, land, capital, gain, their country, religion, their wedded wives, the law, competition and war; and that "the Have-nots" love none of these things, and under Socialism are individually to have none of them. This assumed difference might stand as the text of a great portion of what is hereinafter to be propounded, for

it is the very *raison d'être* of Socialism, the very keystone of its arch, without which it could be nothing but at best a mere passing revolution; all the present "Haves" being exterminated *quâ* Haves, a new set of "Haves" would immediately take their place, and all would go on as before, in fact, as in our present denounced system. For if the class for which Socialists profess to be fighting love all the things the other classes love, such as: private property in land, in wife and child, country, religion, and law (for all of which "the Haves" are prepared to fight to the death), how will the members of this so-called Proletariat class stand having to sacrifice and efface themselves daily and hourly for the sake of the community? How, when they have been promised ease and pleasure, will they bear self-denial? How, if they love private property, will they endure the coercion which prevents it? Or how, if they are attached to their religion and their country, will they see these attacked and abstain from resenting it and attacking the attackers? It is evident, if they love any of these things, that they will turn upon the enemies and destroyers of them. So that the whole of this question of Socialism might thus resolve itself into an investigation of the characteristics of human nature; whether the qualities which now exist so strenuously, and upon which civilisation is founded, are inherent or only accidental, manifesting themselves as in the present "Haves," but being entirely absent in the "Have-nots," whether these qualities will be found to have no natural root, and thus immediately disappear or be easily eradicated upon the disappearance of the "Haves," in which case there would be no fear of future accumulations, of future patriotism and religion, nor of any recrudescence of the laws

and customs of civilisation, nor any difficulty in preventing such recrudescence. For it is clear that if the Socialist dogma—"Confiscation is Justice"[1]—were accepted by all, and the possessing classes were expropriated to-morrow, on the ground that private property is a crime[2] and the root of all evil, and the love of it debasing and irrational, a new possessing class would arise on the morrow, or on the first receipt of wages, unless the expropriators were radically different in nature from the expropriated, and had none of their feelings and desires, and thus the whole tragedy of revolution and confiscation would have been enacted in vain. But the fact is that the theory, tacitly or inferentially postulated here, of the inherent dissimilarity in the respects referred to of the propertied and unpropertied classes, is but a sorry postulate, and one for which there is no warrant; yet it is the assumption which welds the whole Socialist system together; it is the foundation upon which it stands, and without it the entire structure is fated to fall to pieces.

Socialists, however, do not venture to formulate it as fundamental, and this for good reasons: first, because if they did, their adherents and their audiences would diminish sensibly; and next, because directly they try to make practical plans for the distribution, on their principles, of the objects of production and exchange, they come face to face with a difficulty which presents itself again and again, rising at every turn like a stone wall before them—a wall which they can neither climb over, nor demolish, nor get round, one against which

[1] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Socialism."

[2] "If a man can have no crime imputed to him save this, that he has accumulated riches, that alone is enough to send him to hell."—*Benson.*

they make an ever-increasingly inadequate provision—provision which never meets the demand, although the demand does not grow, but only looms larger and larger in their view from the almost infinitesimal speck they at first perceived to a rock of unpleasantly formidable dimensions. As if this rock were a maw of insatiable craving they fling down fragment after fragment of their cherished principle: the Abolition of Private Property, which is whittled away from the absolute "No Private Property" to: "Property will be allowed in articles of consumption," and then to: "non-interest-bearing deposits of surplus wages in the Communal Bank" (which deposits, observe, would thus be entirely in the power of the Socialist State); and then we have a modification of the content of the very principle itself, although this is not frankly avowed. This modification consists in drawing a distinction between Private Property as it is, and Private Property as it will be when the arrangements of Socialists come into force. The difference, we are told, is that all Private Property, as we have it, is stolen property, that "all wealth is plunder,"[1] whereas all property under Socialism will be acquired by honest work. A vast difference, of course, indeed one that touches vitally, and which may, with another slight modification, inflict a mortal wound upon the still extant and basic Socialist doctrine that individualist property is at the root of all evil, the curse for the abolition of which alone the most drastic revolutionary measures and the overthrow of civilisation would, in Socialist opinion, be a small price to pay. This further slight modification, of course, will not be made so long as the Socialist purpose needs the doc-

[1] Nunquam, "Merrie England."

trine that Private Property is a curse, and it will need it until Socialists have seized all existent property, when it is clear, by their avowed intention of having Banks and private property therein, that they will repudiate the purpose and principle by which they gained sufficient adherents to call Socialism into being.

Few who know anything of Socialism imagine that it is merely a well-intentioned and laudable scheme for the improvement of the condition of the working classes although many, perhaps the majority, of its adherents and of others looking tolerantly or not unfavourably upon it, are carried away by the fascination of some of its lighter literature, and by their sympathy with suffering, to believe this. Those who know it at all know that it is an avowed scheme for the entire destruction of civilisation, with its concomitants—Law and Justice, Private Property, Religion, the Family, Marriage, and National Life. The great body of those who are enthusiastic about it know nothing of this, nor do the majority of those who tolerate it as well-intentioned, nor even many who are averse to it, while others who do know it think all this too outrageous and impracticable to be seriously entertained by any one.

Socialists themselves have become alive to the fact that many of their doctrines and views are repulsive to a large number of those who were otherwise willing to give in their adherence, and that such doctrines and views must no longer be stated baldly as at first, nor at all. They do not, however, address themselves to the learned, the thoughtful, the far-seeing, the experienced—they know these are not to be captured save by force; they speak to one class principally, the class whose support is

necessary to them, the working class, for they cannot capture property without this class; and to dreamers, the imaginative, the unpractical, and the benevolent; they say the principles they advocate and the measures they propound are grounded and rooted in justice—but their justice is not the justice we know; it is something new and unknown.

It will be observed that in these pages I oppose the term Non-Socialist instead of Individualist to the term Socialist, and I do so because, although Individualism is conventionally the antithesis of Socialism, it by no means follows that all who are not Socialists are Individualists, as Individualists are commonly assumed by Socialists to be.[1]

There are numerous tenets and principles ascribed to Individualists which many do not care to identify themselves with, and which have been shown to lead logically to odious and repulsive conclusions. Individualism is, therefore, a term which many who are opposed to Socialism refuse to accept, feeling that they thereby lie open to some misapprehension; moreover, they repudiate the notion that they are antagonistic to their kind. Man is a social being, and cannot exist otherwise than socially; but Socialism being a conventional term by which the framers of a particular social scheme are known, its opponents can well class themselves conventionally as Non-Socialists

[1] "You have very likely heard of the thing called Individualism. . . . Individualism is a relic of savagery, and its apologists would be agitating for the return of the good old individual right of carrying a stone-club and living by promiscuous robbery and murder, were they not convinced that the law of supply and demand, although a more cowardly and brutal weapon than the cannibal's club, is infinitely more deadly and effective."—*Sidney Webb, "Fabian Essays."*

or Anti-Socialists, while repudiating the self-righteousness which arrogates to itself the monopoly of social and benevolent virtues. Thus, having to accept the term Socialist in its conventional sense, I oppose to it, and only on this account, also in its conventional sense, the term Non-Socialist.

CHAPTER II

SOCIALISM

PART I

SOCIALISM presents itself to the world as a plan for the improvement of the condition of the working and lower classes, and whether accepted or rejected, it is generally taken to be what its advocates profess. But as soon as the means by which the end is to be attained are propounded, it is seen that they are of such a character as to remove them out of the category of means to an end, and raise them to objects of attainment in and for themselves, so that what was *the* object sinks not only to the position of a secondary object, but to that of one among many objects, each of which, to most minds, is of as much importance as the rest; for the abolition of private property, of marriage, of religion and of civilisation is of such importance to the whole of mankind as to sink the project of improving one class from a primary to a secondary position, especially when the welfare of that class is made to depend upon a correct solution of these involved questions, which all admit are questions of the first magnitude. It is highly necessary, when matter so fraught with damage to the deepest and widest interests of mankind is disseminated in a seductive form, and proselytism is being actively and successfully carried on to the most far-reaching extent, that every one, from

highest to lowest, should know all that is involved, should see where they are going or drifting, should consider how much more they will still cede, and determine at what point they will make a resolute stand.

It is imperatively necessary for us to consider whether a battle must be fought, and when and how; or whether and by what means it may be averted; for assuredly, if there is a battle, it will be such a battle for ferocity and desperation as the Empire, or even the world has never yet seen. So that even if Non-Socialism came out victor, Great Britain would probably have sunk in the struggle from her high place in the van of nations and the civilisation and welfare of the world have been thrown back for an indefinite period.

A very general opinion is abroad among those who witness the spread of Socialism, that, unlike Nihilism, it is harmless and pacific, and that it is based upon principles to which all subscribe; few know that its avowed object is to overthrow all existing social principles and institutions, even civilisation itself, and many even of its enthusiastic advocates (ignorant that this is what Socialists pride themselves upon aiming at, and that they would utterly repudiate any so-called Socialism that did not undertake to achieve it) indignantly repel this charge as slander. The general public does not know that the Socialist system cannot be founded, much less work, without the entire destruction of all that civilisation involves and means. Nor do they know that Socialism and Communism are practically one and the same thing. I shall not attempt to prove this by comparing the doctrines of Socialism with those of Communism. I shall let Socialism speak for itself by extracts from Socialist authorities, which will be simpler and more convincing

than any array of arguments. The principal leaders and lights of Socialism write as follows:—

". . . Taking the evolution of human society . . . and speaking as a Socialist, one might say, a co-operative social state, in which use was for each and possession for all, . . . a society of equals, . . . such a society, let us say, as the end, *telos*, or 'ultimate good' of human evolution."[1]

"Our view is, that unity of life is the basis of Communism. Property belongs to life, and so far as you and I have consciously one life, we must hold our goods in common."[2]

"Socialism, Communism, or whatever one chooses to call it, by converting private property into public wealth, . . . will, in fact, give life its proper basis and its proper environment."[3]

"Communism is the same as Ideal Socialism."[4]

"Practical Socialism, Ideal Socialism, really they are only part of one whole."[5]

"On this point all Socialists agree. Our aim, one and all, is to obtain for the whole community complete ownership and control of the means of transport, the means of manufacture, the mines, and the land. Thus we look to put an end for ever to the wage system, to sweep away all distinctions of class, and eventually to establish national and international Communism on a sound basis."[6]

"We mean to nationalise or communise the means of production and distribution."[7]

[1] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Socialism."
[2] Hubert Bland, "Fabian Essays."
[3] O. Wilde.
[4] Nunquam, "Merrie England." [5] Ibid.
[6] Manifesto. [7] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Socialism."

"A definitely Socialist party, *i.e.*, a party pledged to the communalisation of all the means of production and exchange."[1]

These pronouncements speak for themselves, and render argument about Communism, Collectivism, and Socialism unnecessary. They make the Communistic nature of Socialism quite clear, and also the fact that, if there are any differences between Socialism, Collectivisim, and Communism, they are comparatively of such a microscopic nature as not to have any general importance.

Many, again, look upon Socialism as "a beautiful dream," but as something which can never come to pass. I shall have to show that it is neither beautiful nor a dream, and that there is every prospect of it coming to pass unless it is looked boldly in the face, and dealt with seriously as a serious fact.

What will be the result of such examination and of any plans for the counteraction of the evil, is for others to consider and to decide. I have here merely to point out that Socialists declare that they are fully "alive to the life and death nature of the struggle" which is to come and come quickly, and that Non-Socialists generally are not alive to it at all.

I have also to show what people generally, and working-men especially, are ignorant of: that marriage and religion are to fall, as logically they must (even if this were not avowed, which it is), with private property and with the establishment of equality of condition; and that all our notions of justice, of stability of principle, of right and wrong, of vice and virtue, of innocence and crime, are repudiated as antagonistic to progress, and as abhorrent to the Socialist mind.

[1] Hubert Bland, "Fabian Essays."

Although this is all set forth plainly enough in works of authority as necessary parts of the Socialist system, it is not to be found (not, at least, in the same form) in its popular literature; there, when it appears at all, it is dressed in some different guise, or it is left out or denied; for if the adherents and admirers of Socialism, who think of it only as a benevolent scheme for ameliorating, removing, or preventing the evils which all deplore, were to realise that their cherished principles and institutions were to be violated and civilisation destroyed, they would be repelled and turned into enemies. When Mr. Hyndman was lecturing at the Athenæum Hall, he spoke of the "cant talked about family life—man after all being but the highest animal, and there being no family life among cats and dogs, and that it was the duty of the State in many cases to take children from their parents," a Socialistic working-man, upon whom the real aims of Socialism, and the real meaning of its plans and views evidently never dawned before, called out, "If you come and take away my kid, Mr. Hyndman, I can tell you I'll shoot you."

Socialism does not tell the working-man all that is involved in the change contemplated; it misleads him as to the nature of what it proposes, keeps him in the dark as to what it expects will follow even a successful revolution, and hides the most important changes in store for him in the Socialist future, while painting a picture for his seduction of things that are most unlikely to become possible—things that to most minds seem to be beyond the power of any man or any system to realise.

In a recent number of the *Clarion* we find the following:—"Socialism will cure all evil desires, destroy

all brutishness, cauterise all social diseases!" No object is more desirable than the improvement of the condition of those who suffer, but such promises can never be fulfilled, nor is Socialism a remedy; and further, if it were a remedy for anything, it involves the violation and annihilation of a civilisation cherished by all except Socialists; moreover, theft, compulsion, and bloodshed are involved in the attainment of it, and this on such a scale as the world has never yet seen.

Thus the working classes are to be won to carry out what cannot be effected without them, they not knowing what the exact result to themselves will be; and only, if at all, dimly perceiving that the attainment of many different objects, each of which rivals the other in magnitude, are treated as means to the end proposed.

It becomes, therefore, necessary to investigate carefully many subjects, to consider many different problems, for it is imperative that every man should arrive at some sort of final conviction concerning such questions as the following:—

1. *Equality of condition.*—Is it practicable? Is it desired by the masses for whom it is to be won? What will it result in? Is the result desirable?

2. *Abolition of Private Property.*—Does any large body of men desire to be debarred from obtaining possession of the means of production and exchange, from keeping them and doing as they like with them? Does any large body of men desire to be debarred from the hope of practically employing such individually? Will it be possible to eradicate this desire (existing as it does apparently in all men) and to prevent accumulation, and the use of this accumulation in whatever way men please?

3. Will confiscation or compulsory renunciation of the private property of those now holding it have the expected result—*i.e.* the improvement of the condition of the working classes and the increased prosperity of the nation? Will not the workers and the nation, if the abolition of private property is successful, immediately fall a prey to a foreign conqueror and a despotism?

4. *Religion.*—How long will it take to root out religion? What will be done with the vast body of clergy, priests, and ministers? Will the people consent to their annihilation? Will religion ever disappear while they are there? Can Socialism ever get instituted, or go on, with this hierarchy of rebels in their midst? Will this hierarchy and those who support it and look up to it ever acquiesce in Socialist doctrine and practice? Will Socialism ever acquiesce in the promulgation and practice of the doctrines of this hierarchy?

5. *Freedom of Contract.*—Will the body of workingmen ever abdicate their right to enforce by law the contracts they choose to make?

6. *Marriage.*—Will the majority of men ever consent to renounce their right to wife or child? Can equality of condition and abolition of private property be brought about or consist with property in wife and child? Will the disappearance of monogamic marriage and the institution of a National Foundling produce happiness and greatness? Can this be enforced, and can it last?

All these grave subjects have to be considered before consent can be obtained to the sweeping away of civilisation.

In approaching Socialism, then, what has to be confronted is not one great question, but many various

and vital questions, each of which is of first-class importance to every man, be he working-man or any other; and upon the answer to which the life not merely of individuals, or of a class, or of several classes, but of a nation, anxious and determined to continue to be a nation, depends.

To give some idea of the variety and importance of these questions, it will be convenient here to set forth in their own words what Socialists indicate as the position between Socialism and Non-Socialism, by giving a few extracts from their principal and popular authorities.

Karl Marx, the founder of modern Socialism, says: "We shall have deserved well of it if we stir up hatred and contempt against all existing institutions. We make war against all prevailing ideas of the State, of Country, of Patriotism. The idea of God is the keystone of a perverted civilisation. It must be destroyed. The true root of liberty, equality, and culture is Atheism."

Mr. Belfort Bax says: "Socialism has been well described as a new conception of the world presenting itself in industry as co-operative Communism; in politics as International Republicanism; in religion as Atheistic Humanism, by which is meant the recognition of social progress as our being's highest end and aim. The establishment of society on a Socialistic basis would imply the definite abandonment of all theological cults."[1] He also says the Socialist sees in civilisation "a fatal upas-tree, blasting all human aspiration and happiness. The fact that we see it as it is, is an earnest that its destruction is nigh."[2]

[1] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Socialism," p. 118.
[2] Ibid.

". . . The maintenance of private property in the means of production is in flagrant opposition to the concept of 'justice.' Confiscation is right and justice. This is the real issue. Unless a man accept the last-named stand-point unreservedly, he has no right to call himself a Socialist. If he does accept it, he will seek the shortest and most direct road to the attainment of justice, rather than any longer and more indirect ones, of which it is at best doubtful whether they will attain the end at all. The moment you talk of compensation you surrender the Socialist principle of justice; for compensation can only be real if it be adequate, and can only be adequate if it counterbalances, and thereby annuls, the confiscation."[1]

"But ere we reach our reconstruction, we have the last agonised throes of revolution to pass through. The privileged classes, it is too much to hope, will surrender without a struggle. But we are nearing the catastrophe. Our churches and chapels, our prisons, our reformatories, our workhouses, may be full to overflowing; but the end is approaching. Already the discerning may see the open tomb in the distance, already hear the chant of the goblins of destiny indicating the termination of the mad chase and the dissolution; it may be by a quiet euthanasia, it may be in blood and fire, of the ghastly mockery of human aspiration we call the civilisation of the nineteenth century."[2]

"What is commonly but often incorrectly called assassination may or may not be morally justifiable. . . . In Russia terrorism must be pronounced unquestionably both morally justifiable and expedient. It may be unhesitatingly affirmed that any sane man who says he believes it wrong to kill the Czar lies.

[1] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Socialism." [2] Ibid.

No man's conscience is so grotesquely twisted as to make him think thus; for it must be remembered this is not a case of Socialism and Anti-Socialism, but of the most elementary form of the rights of liberty and life."[1]

"Civilised law, which is based on the independence of the individual, and on the personal possession and control of property, is necessarily opposed to customary law, which presupposes the dependence of the individual on a group, and the collective ownership of property by that group."[2]

". . . The great truth that modern civilisation not only accrues at best solely to the advantage of a propertied and privileged class, but even that very questionable advantage has been gained by an untold loss for the mass of the people."[3]

"The one aim of Socialism being the victory of the revolutionary principle, any means which would be conducive to that end would of necessity be adopted. For example, the death penalty, the systematic maintenance of which as an institution is one of the most outwardly repulsive features of the criminal code of civilisation, might probably have to be held to as the temporary measure of a revolutionary crisis."[4]

". . . The proper course for a revolutionary Government to take in the matter of jurisprudence is . . . to . . . immediately suspend the existing criminal law, and replace it by this code (the Code Napoleon), appointing a committee of urgency to expurgate and amend it, in accordance with the new Socialist conceptions. Such expurgation, it is possible, might leave little of the original in the end."[5]

[1] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Socialism." [2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid. [4] Ibid. [5] Ibid.

". . . The regime of a Socialist administration will involve an enormous change of attitude in dealing with crime. Firstly, it will without doubt reduce to the minimum the number of actions characterised by the law as crimes. Secondly, it will certainly regard the greatest possible consideration for the criminal, compatible with the maintenance of social existence at all, as its first duty in the matter. Thirdly, it will assuredly withdraw the right of prosecution from private individuals, and vest it wholly and solely in the delegates of society."[1]

"The same may be said of false accusation of crime, an offence which is now classed together with others much less serious under the absurd name of Perjury."[2]

"Socialism is not so far off as some people think. At the last elections in Germany, out of 7,000,000 electors who used their vote, 1,500,000 were Socialists and 1,250,000 Radicals. This makes over one-third of the electorate. This third will soon be one-half, and then two-thirds. A real remedy will then be agreed on by Radicals and Socialists, the Radicals coming over to the nationalisation of the instruments of production.[3]

"It might then be a matter of life and death for Socialist Germany to forestall a military and economic isolation in the face of a reactionary European coalition by immediate action, especially against the stronghold of modern commercialism (England). Should such an invasion of the country take place, it would be the duty of every Socialist to do all in his power to assist the invaders to crush the will of the count-of-heads majority of the people of England."

[1] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Socialism."
[2] Ibid. [3] C. Hart.

"The magical terminus *ad quem* . . . is obviously . . . the completion of the process of socialisation, *i.e.*, the complete socialisation not only of the means of production, but of exchange as well."

"The only public opinion, the only will of the majority, which has any sort of claim to the recognition of the Socialist in the present day, is that of the majority of those who have like aspirations with him, . . . in other words, the will of the majority of the European Socialist party."

"The practical question finally presents itself, What is the duty of the convinced Socialist towards the present mechanical majority, say, of the English nation —a majority mainly composed of human cabbage-stalks, the growth of the suburban villa and the slum respectively? The answer is, Make use of it wherever possible without loss of principle, but where this is not possible, disregard it. The Socialist has a distinct aim in view. If he can carry the initial stages towards its realisation by means of the count-of-heads majority, by all means let him do so. If, on the other hand, he sees the possibility of carrying a salient portion of his programme by trampling on this majority, by all means let him do this also."

". . . The first course is the reduction of the working day to eight hours or less . . . the enactment of a law of maximum and minimum; and the third, the abrogation of 'civil' law, especially that large department of it which is concerned with the enforcement of contract and recovery of debt."

"By the law of maximum and minimum, then, we mean the fixation of a maximum or compulsory price for all the necessary articles of daily consumption—ordinary food, clothing, firing, &c., and a minimum or

lowest wage for tne day's work in every industry, or at least in all the more important industries."

"The motto of the Socialist should be the shortest way to the goal."

Mr. Bernard Shaw says: "What, then, does a gradual transition to Social Democracy mean? It means the gradual extension of the franchise, and the transfer of rent and interest to the State, not in one lump sum, but by instalments. Looked at in this way, it will at once be seen that we are already far on the road, and are being urged further by many politicians who do not dream that they are touched with Socialism."[1]

"What the achievement of Socialism involves economically is the transfer of rent from the class which now appropriates it to the whole people."

"What, then, does a gradual transition to Social Democracy mean specifically? It means the gradual extension of the franchise."[2]

"Now, the proposal is to tax the landlords, in order to get some of our money back from them—take it from them first, and find a use for it afterwards. Ever since Mr. Henry George's book reached the English Radicals, there has been a growing desire to impose a tax of 20s. in the pound on obviously unearned incomes; that is, to dump £450,000,000 a year down on the Exchequer counter, and then retire with three cheers for the restoration of the land to the people."[3]

"Politicians who have no suspicion that they are Socialists are advocating further instalments of Socialism with a recklessness of indirect results which scandalises the conscious Social Democrat."[4]

"The luxury of being generous at some one else's

[1] "Fabian Essays." [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid. [4] Ibid.

expense will be irresistible. The ground landlord will be the municipal milch-cow."[1]

"All progress involves the beating of them"—the recognised virtues, honour, chastity, &c.—"from their position."

"Duty is the primal curse from which we must redeem ourselves."[2]

"Unless woman repudiates her womanliness, her duty to her husband, to her children, to society, to the law, and to every one but herself, she cannot emancipate herself. Therefore woman has to repudiate duty altogether."[3]

"I think this is enough for the present. It sounds Utopian, but I have carefully left the Utopian part out, and have confined myself strictly to mere extensions of what is already going on. All that I have forecast has happened to some people already, and some of it will happen to all people before the twenty-first century, if the rate of progress of the last ten years continues."[4]

"For Socialism is by this time a wave surging throughout all Europe, and for want of a grasp of the series of apparently unconnected events by which and with which it has been for two generations rapidly coming upon us—for want, in short, of knowledge of its intellectual history—we in England to-day see our political leaders in a general attitude of astonishment at the changing face of current politics, both great parties drifting vaguely before a nameless undercurrent which they fail utterly to recognise or understand."[5]

"The collective existence we speak of must inevitably in the end become international."[6]

[1] "Fabian Essays." [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid. [4] Ibid. [5] Ibid.
[6] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Socialism."

"They are so near to the individual events that they are blind to the onward sweep of the column. They cannot see the forest for the trees."[1]

"The change is ever going forward, and our society is well on the way to Socialism."[2]

Mr. Sidney Webb says: "The liberty of the property-owner to oppress the propertyless by the levy of the economic tribute of rent and interest began to be circumscribed, pared away, obstructed, and forbidden in various directions. Slice after slice has gradually been cut from the profits of capital, and therefore from its selling value, by socially beneficial restrictions on its user's liberty to do as he liked with it. Slice after slice has been cut off the incomes from rents and interest by the gradual shifting of taxation from consumers to persons enjoying incomes above the average of the kingdom. Step by step the political power and political organisation of the country have been used for industrial ends."[3]

"Socialism is the common holding of the means of production and exchange, and the holding of them for the equal benefit of all."[4]

"What is the revolution for which Socialists strive? —A revolution in the methods of the distribution of wealth, &c., &c."[5]

"How are the forms of government changed?—By means of revolutions."

"Give an instance of this.—The French Revolution."

"What has hitherto prevented the workers from combining for the overthrow of the capitalist system? —Ignorance and disorganisation."

[1] "Fabian Essays." [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.
[4] Hubert Bland, "Fabian Essays."
[5] J. L. Joynes, "Socialist Catechism."

"What course should they (the workers) pursue? —Organise their ranks; demand restitution of their property; keep it under their control; and work it for their own benefit."[1]

"The State could compete with the capitalist by providing employment for the labourers, and paying them the full value of their productions."[2]

"What would be the effect of this upon the private capitalist?—His power would be gone at once, since no labourers would work for him except on such terms as would leave him no surplus value whatever."[3]

". . . All remedies which reject the nationalisation of the instruments of production must be sham ones."

"The *mot d'ordre* for Socialists now is, Convert the electors and capture the County Councils."

"It remains to give every adult a vote in the election of councillors; to shorten their term of office to a year; to pay the councillors, so that the public may have a right to the whole of their working time; to give the councils power to take and hold land . . . and to remove all legal restrictions, so as to leave them as free to act corporately as an individual is to act individually."

"The 'public conscience' will soon condone, nay, it will first approve and then demand, expropriation of capital. . . ."

"Whose interest will it be to protest against the State taking over the capital, transforming James and Sam from wage-slaves, at the mercy of a foreman, into shareholders and public functionaries, with a voice in the management of the business in which they are employed?"

[1] J. L. Joynes, "Socialist Catechism." [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.

"It is one of the symptoms of the coming change that, in perfect unconsciousness of the nature of his act, Mr. Ritchie has established the Commune. He has divided England into districts ruled by County Councils, and has thus created the machinery without which Socialism was impracticable."

We have it then here clearly stated that Socialism is to destroy Patriotism, Religion, Honour, Chastity, and Civilisation; to abolish Private Property, and to silence the voice of the nation by the assistance of foreign armies; that it will not hesitate to achieve its objects by confiscation, revolution and assassination, but that the County Councils will in all probability be a sufficient instrument for effecting the whole of the programme by placing power gradually but entirely in the hands of Socialists.

CHAPTER III

SOCIALISM

PART II

THE extracts in the preceding chapter make it sufficiently clear what Socialism is, what its objects are, and what are the designs and intentions of its leaders.

It is a system which, we may clearly see, has two distinct primary aims—(1) The overthrow of civilisation and all that is inherent in it, *i.e.*, inequality of condition, the rights of private property, freedom of contract, competition, religion, marriage, and justice. (2) The institution of a civilisation entirely different from any the world has yet known, and which in all its features is the antithesis of that which it is aimed to subvert.

It may thus be divided into two parts, the one, preliminary to its inauguration, dealing with expropriation (*i.e.*, taking the land and all the means of production and exchange from their present possessors), and with the destruction of civilisation generally; and the other part dealing with plans for the construction of a system of government and of society which shall replace antithetically the civilisation to be overturned.

These two essentially different parts are not necessarily connected; either might exist without the other; for if it is true that everything that is presently possessed has been stolen, it is only necessary to prove this,

and make restitution to those from whom it was stolen; for the primary principle embedded in the laws of civilisation—one which there is every effort made to carry into effect with the utmost stringency—is that everything which is stolen must be restored to its rightful owners. Consequently there is no necessity to embark upon a course of destruction and reconstruction for this purpose, nor does expropriation necessarily involve any of the other Socialist plans.

When we are told that the abolition of civilisation as well as of government is necessary to effect it, we know that there must be some other reason, and one which has nothing to do with just claims on existing property, or with the restitution of stolen goods. And this conclusion receives confirmation from the fact that justice is also to be abolished—the justice of civilisation—and that a new something which has not yet been defined or even explained (except in the pronouncement that to do this is just) is to be put in its place. Indeed, Socialists are at one with us in this contention, for they avow that an entirely new civilisation, an entirely new idea of justice, entirely new civil and criminal codes, entirely new ideas, and antagonistic to those which at present prevail concerning marriage and religion, as well as a new system of government, are necessary for the carrying out of their plans in the future, and for the control and regulation of future earnings and future wealth. It is thus not for this really quite subordinate purpose of righting a great wrong, or the alleviation of distress, that Socialism is to be called into being, but for the reconstruction of man's nature, and for the acquirement by Socialism of all the future wealth of the world. This Socialists will not deny; on the contrary, they avow that they would scorn anything less than the

control of the entire wealth of the future, although willing to take in the meantime instalments of anything which may lead nearer to the goal, or make the journey thither swifter and easier.

Apart from the execution of any of these other stupendous Socialist plans, forcible or violent expropriation might be achieved any day by those who had the power (our notions of honesty being frankly repudiated as they are by Socialists), without destroying civilisation, without denying the right of every one to have full control over his rightfully acquired property, without enforcing equality of condition and compulsion to labour,—thus all these Socialist intentions spring from some other source than the praiseworthy wish to restore stolen goods.

On the other hand, it would be quite possible to carry out Socialism intact without expropriation, *i.e.*, appropriation by Socialists of all existent wealth. None of the various Socialist communities of the present, any more than those of the past, in which no private property exists and strict community of goods is indispensable, have ever made expropriation a part of their system; and the Socialists of England, Germany, and any other country could, like these, put every part of their plans in force without it if they chose, for the very keystone of their arch is, "Labour is the only source of wealth;" so they have only to set to work, seeing that as much labour as they desire is at their command, to become the possessors of as much wealth as they like to create, which would be much easier, speedier, and surer than expropriation, violence, bloodshed, and compulsion. Nothing can be clearer than this if their doctrine be true.

But there are two proofs that Socialists do not

believe this professed creed of theirs—this on which alone they found their accusation that all wealth is stolen; and be it remembered that on the truth or falseness of this doctrine the value or the worthlessness of the whole Socialist propaganda depends the whole value or the entire worthlessness of it as a remedy—and on the truth or falseness of this doctrine depends also the answer to the question: Is Socialism a blessed universal panacea for all ills, as it professes to be, or the most infamous concoction that quackery ever invented?

The first proof that Socialists do not themselves believe their own doctrine is, that they delay the execution of the beneficent scheme they have so much at heart—for professedly the benefit of the indigent millions—in order to seize the wealth of the present, which is but as a drop in the ocean compared to that which they could create in less time than it will require to effect expropriation. For it has been said on good authority (and they themselves seem to adopt the estimate), that all existent wealth has been made "within the last twelve years," and that this process is continually and increasingly going on, so that with the indigent and the working millions, who by far outnumber the propertied, they could immediately produce such vast wealth as would effectually convert, and in the simplest, swiftest, and most beneficial way, the whole of the workers of the world —convert them to Socialism and convert them into rich men.

Why then do they not do it, if their hearts are bleeding for the indigent? Why do they not do it, instead of fanning flames and reviling others for the hardness of their hearts, and for their nature, which is not

as theirs? The only answer is because their doctrine is not true; they cannot do it because it is not true that "labour is the only source of wealth," and they know it. Therefore they do not believe what they preach; they do not believe what they stand up and glorify Karl Marx for. But they do believe that if they can only get other people to believe it, expropriation and all other Socialist doctrine will be striven for with all the might of those who need, and of those who sorrow for the needs of others.

The second proof that they do not believe this doctrine of theirs is that compulsion to labour and enforced equality of condition (two very difficult things to put in force), which are fundamental portions of their scheme, would not be necessary if labour were the only source of wealth; for if men by labour alone could create wealth, they would need no compulsion, and it would be unnecessary to enforce equality of condition, when every man's labour was creating wealth by which each could satisfy all his desires, and even by their own calculations a much greater amount of wealth than at present, as Socialism would stop, it is alleged, all the waste, extortion, and robbery which now goes on. It is not to the point to say that the labourer is at present robbed of the wealth his labour creates, for Socialists need admit no one within their fold who either would or could rob; they could exclude and expel all such, wherever their fold might be.

Socialism, then, evidently does not believe its own doctrine, does not see any force or virtue in it, and consequently determines to have all the wealth which at present exists, together with all the land which is in the centre of civilisation (and therefore the most

valuable), although there is plenty which may be had for the asking elsewhere.

And herein is another proof of their disbelief of their own creed; for they know they could produce nothing from those vast tracts of rich virgin soil with all their mineral wealth (which lie waiting for those who bring what is necessary to extract the riches), although they were to put all the labour of the globe upon them, if they put labour alone, labour which "is the only source of wealth;" not unless, they well know, some other conditions were present which are not inherent in labour, and which labour cannot command.

To say that labour has created those conditions is not true, and is not to the point; for it is not true that labour creates ability, talent, genius, energy, mind; and it is not to the point, because, if even some labour had created some wealth, this wealth which some labour had created does not belong to that labour which did not create it; and because "labour is the only source of wealth" is unconditioned, therefore it is not to the point to speak of other conditions of any sort as necessary to it.

Thus Socialism, from not believing its own doctrine, has had to make plans for expropriation and for the annihilation of all that impedes it from "the golden round," and thus is more Nihilistic than Nihilism itself, though not in its methods, yet in its effects. "Our goal is now well understood, and no longer to be misconstrued. . . . We know that it is the utter overthrow and extirpation of the whole wage and private-property system that we are making for. We are unanimously resolved to tumble over and crumble all the institutions that maintain the supremacy of indi-

vidual grab over the general interest and common weal. We have sworn to smash and pulverise the gilded gods within the cold crafty eyes of glass that unceasingly mock our people's wretchedness from their lofty shrines above our national altars. We are determined to revolutionise England and England's ideals and English society."[1]

But linked with this destructive, this Nihilistic scheme, is the constructive one for the erection of a State endowed with the whole of the wealth acquired by expropriation, and with power to acquire all future wealth by the prevention of individual possession; for individuals of ability would, in the future, as they do in the present, thwart the desire of the incapable to live on the productions of the capable, and thus nullify the designs of Socialism on future wealth, unless the State monopolised, and unless it instituted equality of condition, and put this into force with such rigorous search and repression as is as yet unrecorded in the annals of despotism and bureaucracy.

Therefore the organism of the new State has been carefully and powerfully contrived, and thus is Socialism constructive as well as destructive.

Construction, as regards the future, is a distinctive feature of Socialism, and herein it differs from Nihilism, which does not construct anything, but abolishes all government. Neither does Socialism count violence among its *chosen* methods. It does not object to it, if necessary; on the contrary, it arranges for revolution and bloodshed, and "the shortest way to the goal" is its motto; but it considers dynamite and means of that sort, while "noble" in the hands of others, retardative of its own purposes. It regards the Nihilist as a man

[1] *Clarion.*

whose only fault is that he is "too good for this world," but thinks that in England more is achieved by peaceful and constitutional than by violent means.

But apart from its selected methods, Socialism, till such time as it shall establish itself, is more Nihilistic than Nihilism itself, inasmuch as Nihilism seeks principally to destroy government, whereas Socialism means to destroy, not only existing government, but every existing institution—religion, marriage, freedom of contract, nationality, and civilisation itself. A cleaner sweep could not possibly be made. Nor does it matter at all to the result whether this be achieved by dynamite or more lingering "labour in a penal colony;" the result is the point to be considered, and the result is the annihilation of every existing institution and of everything, including art and literature, of which we have any knowledge, with, of course, the exception of wealth, the acquisition of which is the object of the threatened general destruction.

But the moment the Socialist State establishes itself, it has done with Nihilism, and begins to be constructive, and the very opposite of Nihilistic; for, unlike Nihilism, its very aim and object from this time forth is to maintain itself as government—as government of the most extreme kind; it not only intends to govern in the ordinary acceptation of the idea, as republics or monarchies, or even despotisms govern, but to rule and regulate (in order to prevent all tendency to variation) every detail of the individual's life with such thoroughness as shall out-Herod in the grandmotherliness of all grandmotherly governments that have ever gone before.

Hitherto, even under Oriental despotisms, the individual has had the full control of everything that his

Government did not take from him and his heirs. He could amass as much or as little wealth as he liked, and he could use what he did amass in any way he liked; he could also spend it as he liked, in any extravagance he chose, or he could put it to use and increase it in any way or to any extent he saw fit; he could live as expensively and luxuriously as he desired; he could devise his wealth to any one he selected to inherit it; he could regulate his own family, and he had the control of his own children; he could work as hard as he liked, or he could be absolutely idle and live upon charity or upon his savings, all this under the sternest despotism. But Socialism does not intend to allow any liberty of this sort. No man will be allowed to be idle; every man will be compelled to work, and to work manually.

"How would Socialism deal with this question of work?—It would compel every one to do his share of the necessary work of the world."[1]

"What do you mean by necessary labour?—That which would feed and clothe and keep in comfort the nation, if all took their part in performing it."[2]

". . . But nothing short of a display of organised force will enable the idlers as a body to perceive the advantage of taking their due share in the necessary work of society under a just system of Socialism."[3]

"Let the majority, if so minded, exact more stringent standards of discipline and efficiency in work, and enforce obedience to them."[4]

"The public weal is incompatible with the existence of consumers who do not produce."[5]

[1] J. L. Joynes, "The Socialist Catechism."
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Socialism."
[5] Bernard Shaw, "Fabian Essays."

No man will be allowed to do what he likes with what he earns, *i.e.*, he will not be allowed to make any use (except in so far as he consumes them) of his earnings, or to increase them either by receiving interest, by employing them in commerce or in agriculture, or in any way productively; he will not be allowed to spend them in luxuries which other people do not indulge in or have not, whether such luxuries be art or machinery, or tools or houses, or anything, in fact, which exceeds or differs from what his neighbours have.

The following extracts will be sufficient to substantiate these statements:—

". . . If the laws of property are not to establish a parasitic class, taking tribute from the labour of others in the forms of rent and interest, then we must modify our administration of property."[1]

". . . How do men grow rich?—In these days the chief sources of wealth are:—1. Rent. 2. Interest. 3. Profits."[2]

"How does the landlord secure his profit?—By extorting from the labourer a share of all that he produces."[3]

"Socialism involves discontinuance of the payment of these incomes (of landlord and capitalist), and addition of the wealth so saved to incomes derived from labour."[4]

"Of the abolition of civil law I have elsewhere spoken, showing this law to be indeed the logical result of an individualist society and the indispensable corollary

[1] Sidney Oliver, "Fabian Essays."
[2] Nunquam, "Merrie England."
[3] J. L. Joynes.
[4] Bernard Shaw, "Fabian Essays."

of such a society, but to have no reason of being in one based on collective possession."[1]

". . . The corrupting influence of luxury hitherto has mainly resided in the fact that it was not enjoyed by all."[2]

". . . If the cabinet is a thing of beauty and worth the seeing, it ought to be taken from the rich benefactor, whose benefaction consists in his having plundered it from the poor, . . . and this is one of the rich man's greatest crimes, that he keeps hoarded up in his house a number of things that ought to be the common heritage of the people."[3]

The preceding quotations make it clear that if a man is neither to have rent, interest, nor profit, he cannot employ his savings productively; that if he is not to possess any work of art, or any luxury not enjoyed by all, that he cannot spend his money as he pleases; and this is clinched by the fact that civil law is to be abolished on the strength of collective possession; for if nothing is possessed by any one which others have not, or which does not belong to every one, there could not be much temptation to theft; under Socialism (as a popular teacher informs us) there will be "nothing to steal but food and clothing,"[4] and as every one would have enough of these, there would be no object in theft. Equality of condition alone involves the negation of the individual, and of his full control over himself and of whatsoever he may possess.

Thus at every point along the line Socialism comes into conflict with existing ideas centering indirectly and ultimately in property, and this so acutely that

[1] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Socialism." [2] Ibid.
[3] Nunquam, "Merrie England." [4] Ibid.

civilisation has to be got rid of, a new civilisation devised, and new views and new methods adopted which will put into the hands of Socialists all the wealth that is and is to be, and at the same time approve them honest men and benevolent withal. Hence the destructive and the constructive parts of this system, which, although not necessary to each other, are both necessary to the fulfilment of Socialist desires and the execution of Socialist plans.

The reason Socialists give for their intention to destroy civilisation is that it is "a curse," and pernicious in all its works. "So with the Socialist to-day. He sees the great curse, bourgeois civilisation, around him on all sides. The one hope which fills the whole horizon of his vision is the destruction of that curse."[1] And, "The Socialist is bound, therefore, when viewing civilisation statically, to pronounce it unreservedly an unmitigated evil." An evil to be accepted because it is necessary to be passed through, as through a miasmic swamp, in order to attain its antithesis—the civilisation of Socialism. It is . . . "a fatal upas-tree, blasting all human aspiration and happiness. The fact that we see it as it is, is an earnest that its destruction is nigh."[2] This fatal upas-tree, civilisation, is to be cut down and destroyed. Nothing which civilisation has given is worth keeping; on the contrary, Mr. Bernard Shaw says, "The grotesquely hideous march of civilisation from bad to worse," which has given us "the purchasing power that commands luxuries, . . . what has it heaped up over and above the pittance of its slaves? Class literature and class art, and not a little poison and mischief."[3]

[1] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Socialism." [2] Ibid.
[3] "Fabian Essays."

That those who detest so fiercely should seek to destroy ruthlessly is comprehensible and consistent; but who are those that hate? The haters are the unpropertied, those who have not by bequest or inheritance received, or by their own industry or ability earned the fortunes which the industry or ability of other men have earned; these are they who have conceived the idea of taking the possessions of all who have any, and have formed plans for carrying expropriation into effect.

And why do they hate so comprehensively? Civilisation has given all of us literature, music, poetry, the magnificent achievements of science, and all that makes man different from the savage; its benefits are equally open to all, according to the extent to which each man, prompted by his ability, appreciation, energy, and strength of character, chooses to avail himself of them; and those who have neither energy nor mind partake indirectly, in spite of their moral and intellectual defects, of that which others benefit by in proportion to their capacity and desire. But the envious, who have not had the manfulness, mind, or effective desire to raise themselves to the fullest, or to a fuller participation of that which hitherto each individual has had to win for himself and for those for whom he is responsible, cast longing eyes on the acquisitions and enjoyments of those who have more of them than themselves, and they have devised a scheme of wholesale confiscation which necessarily involves a plan for the annihilation of the civilisation which has enabled the intellect and moral strength of the world to tower above savages, the uncivilised world, and the rest of humanity.

Although Socialism seized on the whole wealth of

the world to-morrow, no permanent benefit could accrue to it while any system existed which allowed inequality in the sense of superiority of talent or character to assert itself. Civilisation allows liberty to talent and character to grow and develop as they will at their own cost, at their own risk; and is so appreciative of, and so thankful for, the benefit which such free development directly and indirectly bestows, that it fosters it, and gives all freedom to every individual for his growth, and for the cultivation of everything he thinks needful for his own progress. While it does not prescribe what is good or needful, it leaves each man free to decide this for himself, and it leaves this freedom to all individuals alike. It leaves each to deal as he will with himself and his own, to propose to himself his own goal, and devise his own means for arriving there, its principles being that government is there for the maintenance of order and for the devising of measures of protection against foreign foes.

The Socialist condemns struggle. He considers all struggle as baneful. "I say no struggle is necessary."[1] Ease for every one is his object. The Non-Socialist says man has to struggle always, first with himself, then with circumstances and with nature. He sees in man a being born to strife, primarily with himself to subdue the evil within; man being, as it were, a Janus, each side equally important; a Jekyll and Hyde, one of whom always preponderates, having continually to struggle to keep the lower, the inferior, in abeyance—a being always to be conquered or to come forth conqueror; in circumstances man finds not always a friend, often an unvanquishable foe, but always either friend or foe, according, and in proportion, as the

[1] Nunquam, "Merrie England."

man who confronts them is conqueror over or slave to himself; and again, he finds often a deadly foe in Nature, the powerful, the terrible, the inscrutable, whose secrets have to be wrung from her, who never divulges them or yields them to any but the strong and resolute wrestler. Her beauty is for all to behold, her secrets for none but her conqueror, whom she will slay if he does not read her riddle aright; only to the able, to the enduring, to the irresistible struggler will she reveal herself; only to him who conquers the unknown, the uncalculated for; only to the untiring, the untired in the strife; never to the lover of ease, to the shrinker from the fray. Her flames have to be ridden across, and he who struggles through will be victor, he and no other.

The incapable, the slothful, the lower orders of mind, see in the hands of the navigator the egg standing alone, unsupported on the board, which in their hands only rolled; and instead of recognising the master, and appreciating the parable, think it unfair that so simple a thing and so easy to do should win such large rewards (as indirectly it does win) for the doer of it. They are filled with envy. They have slept while others watched, and they awake crying, "Give us of your oil" that we may enter in. To them, "Too late, too late, ye cannot enter now," is barbarous, a civilisation which allows it must be destroyed. They have not the capacity even to perceive that this seeming trifle—the breaking of the eggshell, or the oil in the lamp—is symbolical of all. They know, but they do not learn. They have not even "that within" which enables men to "mark, learn, and inwardly digest," and so win their way along the weary road which leads to greater things.

They see the vast fortunes which are to them as coining of gold, but they have not any inkling of how it is done, so they think it must be by manual labour. To the envious and incapable it is all done by the injustice of civilisation, which allows the strong to rob the weak. The fact that these colossal fortunes are almost without exception made by those who have been workers, often of the lowest rank, teaches them nothing.

A banquet, rich and costly in wines and fruits, lights and splendour, delighting the wondering feasters, urges them to ask, "How have you done it?" Their host, speaking no word, but rising and putting out all the myriad wax-lights but one, reseating himself and remarking, "That is how it was done, my friends; never two lights if one would do," teaches them nothing. Thrift is despised for its own sake, and preached against to the poor by Socialists. "Thrift was invented by capitalist rogues to deprive honest fools of their diet,"[1] and all that it means and presupposes is ignored.

So even if they blow out their lights and, having got the hint, make the egg stand alone, yet it avails them nothing, for the one great fact behind (which it is above all things necessary to grasp) they do not even perceive—that it is he who originates and initiates, and he alone, who has in him the power to do what to them is unattainable. This is what is not acknowledged, because those who cannot do the same are not capable of grasping or perceiving the meaning of things—the meaning of that which is indispensable. They have not the power of origination and initiation, nor are they capable of appreciating, much less of understanding it. Such truths are to the muddy-minded too humble to be of any use; they tell

[1] John Burns.

no tale (except superficially as regards the individual), they have no deeper, world-wide, universal meaning for the feeble wit which deems that all could be millionaires, artists, poets, if all had an equal chance. The wit which knows not that the history of life, the history of all of us who have failed, is a history of inability, a history of chances thrown away. To such it only seems that those who do things so easily ought to be constrained to keep and maintain those dim-eyed fumblers groping their laborious way down the slopes of time, together with all those helpless ones whom they may choose to place around them. Nay, more, that he ought to be constrained to abandon the fruits of his own toil and struggle to those who have neither struggled nor toiled. And because civilisation does not do this, does not think it ought to be done, and because it allows the bright-eyed, winged, soul to achieve its aspirations, and will not permit it to be dragged down into the mire and clogged with the burdens others are responsible for, it is anathematised as the author of all those evils, mental and physical, which crush the crawlers, and which they themselves are in the greatest measure accountable for.

Only to the ignorant does it look easy to climb the heights of enigmatic and conflicting life, which some climb silently and solitarily, yet without murmur, occasionally it may be with joy, but oftener with sorrow, pain, and renunciation; only to the ignorant and the agitator does it seem that struggle, toil, and sorrow are unnecessary in this world of uncomprehended nature, unknowable circumstance, varying and consequently conflicting wills. To know pain, accident, disease, and death, and to hear, "I say there is no necessity for struggle,"[1]

[1] Nunquam, "Merrie England."

is to make men feel that they are mocked, and that Socialism is a doll's house of cards with a serpent watching beneath a tree.

It is so easy to say things ought not to be difficult, and that everything ought to be made comfortable for those who cannot help themselves or anybody else; it is so easy to devise ways of levelling down and making every one as incapable of struggle as possible, in order that one man's stature may not dazzle the eyes of another; it is all so easy, but it is not easy to do what is promised, unless civilisation is destroyed—therefore it is to be destroyed. Envy and greed and incapability are arraigner and judge. It is impossible to persuade men to proceed to expropriation unless the principles which civilisation has inculcated are destroyed. It is impossible to destroy these without destroying civilisation itself. Socialism then seeks to destroy civilisation, and hates it because it does not facilitate the acquisition by the incapable of what the capable achieve.

Socialists do not condemn civilisation without having carefully considered all it has yielded and yields. Mr. William Morris says: "We have weighed the work of civilisation in the balance and found it wanting." This civilisation has been brought to the bar of justice and condemned, and "the one hope which fills the whole horizon of his" (the Socialist's) "vision is the destruction of that curse."

They scoff at "Smilesian self-help;" they denounce the energy which has discovered, colonised, and explored (which has not only brought light to the dark places of the earth, but opened, and kept open, for the millions at home, possibilities which are not only essential to their prosperity now, but later to their very existence as a nation) as "the machinery for the wholesale exploitation of Asia and Africa;" and the

vigour which maintains our supremacy (which our forerunners have given their lives to win) in such a way as to avoid war by inspiring aggressors with fear is by them anathematised. Our Frobishers, Drakes, Franklins, Livingstones, Gordons, Stanleys, and Pearys are pirates and adventurers forsooth, while the descendants of the Angles and of the Saxon pirates are put forward as the despoiled. The achievements of science are but mere "means of exploitation" unless they happen to be such as will fit in with, or forward, Socialist plans.

Socialists have decided that the easiest, and on the whole pleasantest, way of achieving the desired ends of expropriation and the inauguration of the new State is by constitutional means, and they think such achievement will be possible up to a certain point; therefore seats in the House and in the County Councils must be won, and such measures passed as will place advantage and power in the hands of Socialists, who indeed for a long time past they have been pointing triumphantly to the Socialistic nature of legislation.

Mr. Sidney Webb notes how: "In the teeth of the current Political Economy, . . . any number of Local Improvement Acts, Drainage Acts, Truck Acts, Mine Regulation Acts, Factory Acts, Public Health Acts, Adulteration Acts, have been passing into law. . . . Slice after slice has gradually been cut from the profits of capital, and therefore from its selling value; . . . slice after slice has been cut off the incomes from rent and interest by the gradual shifting of taxation from consumers to persons enjoying incomes above the average of the kingdom. Step by step the political power and political organisation of the country have been used for industrial ends."[1]

A continuation of such measures is aimed at in the

[1] "Fabian Essays."

following programme, which appeared in the *Star* on the 8th of August 1888:—

Revision of Taxation.

Object.—Complete shifting of the burden from the workers, of whatever grade, to the recipients of rent and interest, with a view to the gradual extinction of the latter class.

Extension of Factory Acts.

Object.—To raise universally the standard of comfort by obtaining the general recognition of a minimum wage and a maximum working day.

Educational Reform.

Object.—To enable all, even the poorest children, to obtain not merely some, but the best education they are capable of.

Reorganisation of Poor Law Administration.

Object.—To provide generously and without stigma for the aged, the sick, and those destitute through temporary want of employment, without relaxing the tests against the endowment of able-bodied idleness.

Extension of Municipal Activity.

Object.—The public organisation of labour for all public purposes and the elimination of the private capitalist and middleman.

Amendment of Political Machinery.

Object.—To obtain the most accurate representation and expression of the desires of the majority of the people at every moment.

The same article points out the constitutional means by which these objects are to be obtained; but when concessions cease, when property makes a stand and resists, then Socialists have decided that revolution must achieve the rest, with the death penalty for Non-Socialist rebels, and punitive measures afterwards. Dynamite, assassination, and terrorism were seen to be unnecessary and inexpedient when English legislation began to be Socialistic, abandoning its principles for Socialistic lines of action. Since that time, and increasingly, Socialists have seen that not only can they acquire by Parliamentary action the power and property they are seeking without risk or danger, but also thus gain time for proselytising, agitating, and organising for the blow which will finally be struck for such remainder of the property as legislation may have refused to transfer.

When that happens, it will be time to show such force as they have been quietly organising, which, it is calculated, will bring in those who would otherwise resist, and so with overwhelming power avoid the otherwise indefinitely lengthened civil war which would inevitably ensue had legislation not already placed so much in Socialist hands as to render serious resistance useless, and the complete conquest of the whole kingdom easy.

Before this, however, and while the constitutional struggle for power was going on throughout the country, much proselytising would do its work among merchants' clerks, bank clerks, Government officials, postmen, policemen, soldiers, sailors, volunteers; all those, indeed, who may be said to hold the keys of wealth and information, and of many strong positions. The volunteers are naturally the most accessible of all

these, and are by far the easiest to win, as they are not liable to dismissal upon suspicion, or to any sort of risk which officials necessarily run.

Much has already been done towards the conversion and corruption of the public services, and this has borne good fruit already in strikes and mutinies, which, although disastrous to the strikers and mutineers, as well as to the country generally in loss of trade and consequent depression, were useful to Socialism in making it clear that, for the future, more prudence would be wise; and now we shall probably know less of what is fermenting than we otherwise should have done. After the Dock strike of 1889 (which was a purely Socialist movement, worked for, and got up by, Socialist leaders), policemen and postmen went on strike, and several regiments refused to do their duties.

It will be remembered that on the 6th of July 1890, policemen to the number of 130 refused to obey the inspectors. They threatened to strike on the following day, and thirty-eight insubordinate constables were dismissed. On the evening of the 7th disorderly and riotous scenes took place in the neighbourhood of Bow Street, and some of the 1st Life Guards were called out, who were not successful in entirely quelling the riot till 1 A.M. On the 8th of July the postmen at the General Post-Office refused to deliver the early morning post. On the same day some unionist postmen drove out seventy non-unionist men from the Parcel Post Depôt. In the same month the 2nd Battalion of the Grenadier Guards refused to obey orders; the 3rd Battalion, who were at Chelsea Barracks, followed the lead of the 2nd Battalion. In August the 52nd Battery of the Royal Horse Artillery, by way of calling attention to their grievances, cut up a quantity of saddles and sets of

harness. At Sheerness some gunners refused to work, and broke out of barracks. In July 1891 two companies of the Coldstream Guards were insubordinate, and refused to obey orders. Although the Grenadier Guards were sent to Bermuda for a year, the mutineers generally were not dealt with severely, nor perhaps was it even realised that both strikes and mutinies were purely Socialist in their nature, origin, and tendency.

If disaffection is as leniently dealt with when the time of convulsion is approaching; if the causes at work in the country generally are ignored, as they were apparently then, the struggle will be a severe and difficult, if not a vain one, and inglorious for us. It must not be forgotten that the volunteers, being fully equipped and drilled, will be invaluable in the day of revolution. Socialists calculate, therefore, that at a certain point, having secured the keys and outposts by the legislative measures which are placing wealth and power in their hands, and having undermined the loyalty of public servants, of the army and the volunteers, things will be ripe for revolution.

But revolutionary and Nihilistic as Socialism is in its preliminary schemes, its Nihilistic character ceases directly it has obtained possession of all existing wealth. From that moment it is the very opposite of Nihilistic. Its first aim (*i.e.*, to obtain possession of all the wealth of the nation and to get civilisation out of the way) having been attained, its second (*i.e.*, the inauguration of the new system) is comparatively easy; for although it involves an entire change in economics, justice, liberty, religion, and morality, the power will be in the hands of the framers of the new methods, and our legislation, as they maintain, has not only taken them far along the road they desire to go, but has actually

put into their hands the machinery of the new government.

It is this, the second part of their plan, which demands investigation, and it is upon this investigation, and the conclusions arrived at, that the fate of England depends. Mr. Belfort Bax has said truly that civilisation is based upon personal possession; that we have inscribed on our banner of justice the right of every man to the full control of everything he has acquired by his own industry, or by bequest or inheritance; to us individual possession is right and just, and best for mankind. When "the revolutionary crisis" comes, which Socialists are striving to bring about, "sudden expropriation," "the great act of confiscation, will be the seal of the new era," the advent of Socialism; then will "the knell of civilisation, with its rights of property and its class society, be sounded," and the reign of the "justice of Socialism, which is not the justice of civilisation," will begin.[1] It is clear, then, that there is a great gulf between our civilisation and that which is to be constructed—possession and the sacredness of it on our side; on the other confiscation, which is the justice of the Socialist world.

A system complete in all its parts has already been elaborated by the principal Socialist leaders; nothing has been forgotten; every detail of every subject has been sufficiently outlined; and if there is any doubt in the minds of the uninitiated as to any particular, it is not that that particular has not been thoroughly thought out and explained as far as may be, but that it has been found necessary, in order to satisfy the "Bourgeois" and the "Proletariat" conscience, to modify, withdraw, and contradict; and these amendments naturally give rise

[1] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Socialism."

to a large amount of confusion, misapprehension, and mystification, which make it necessary (in order to arrive at any accurate understanding of the underlying and essential parts) to clear away, as it were, the accumulated dust and weeds of paradoxical details, so as to be able to place the feet again upon the clear ground of the original construction, which reveals the meaning and motive power of the whole.

Now, it is clear, as Socialism, in antagonising our civilisation, propounds a system based on perfectly antithetical views, that the new and antithetic civilisation under which we are to live depends as to quality and character entirely upon the views and doctrines held by its framers. Thus the vital question for consideration arises, What are these views and doctrines? It is very important, seeing the gigantic strides Socialism is making, that we should all take much pains to acquaint ourselves with them; but they can only be learned by a study of the expression of the opinions and intentions of the propagators of the system, and these will lead us to see what sort of a civilisation we are to have in the place of that which we at present live under.

First we learn (as we have seen) from Mr. William Morris that there will be no art nor literature; he says that this is an experiment which has never been tried before, but that "the past degradation and corruption of civilisation may force this denial of pleasure upon the society which will arise from its ashes," and that we are to wait "till we are purified from the shame of the past corruption, and till art arises again amongst a people freed from the terror of the slave and the shame of the robber."[1] The people to be "freed" are ourselves.

[1] "Useful Work *versus* Useless Toil."

Here we learn that Socialists not only contemplate such civilisation with equanimity, but that they believe, having gone through an experience void of these, they will be "purified."

It would be interesting to learn how, after being deprived of all that is highest, of all that which alone can elevate and refine, after having been tied down to material satisfactions for an indefinite period, and having consequently become very inferior intellectually, people will produce, as foretold, something infinitely superior to what their intellectually trained predecessors and ancestors have produced, or how they will manage to revive learning at all after having passed through a period destitute of literature. We know light did arise after the dark ages, in which art and literature were almost extinct; but the light was a long time in coming, nor have we ever quite recovered from the loss which the darkness caused; for the precedent ages had climbed the heights of many perfections, such as architecture and the knowledge of building and of how to make perfect cement, all of which we can still but strive to imitate; and we hardly even *know* how far we are behind in other matters, such as dress, style, and carriage, and consequently have no desire even to imitate or learn, being ignorant of the fact that many of our ideas, compared to those of the ancients, are little other than grotesque. Yet we have travelled through five hundred years since we emerged from the barren obscurity of the dark ages.

It looks, too, as if there were further confusion of thought in the poet-Socialist's idea; as if all the product of talent, rare industry, and mental attainment were identified with mere pleasure instead of toilsome struggle and elevating, instructive, and strengthening influences.

We are to be punished, to be shut up in a dark cupboard; we are to be well fed and have every material comfort showered upon us, but are to be deprived of everything which could improve, refine, and elevate. We understand, however, that in thus treating people something like felons, the Socialist has devised the most ferocious punishment he could conceive for those to whom art and literature is life; and it is cleverly devised; for although seemingly an equal fate, the torture would not touch the uncultured, gross, and materially-minded at all.

Yet "Nunquam" thinks England would be "merrie"; but when England was "merrie" in her grand old Elizabethan days, she had her Shakespeare, her Marlowe, her Ben Jonson, and a whole galaxy of other such men. There were, too, Drakes, Frobishers, Raleighs, Grenvilles—men who with "one little ship" sailed forth "and dared the power and grandeur of Spain." "Were they devils or men?" They might be devils for aught we know, but they are the men whom England loves, and always will love, as Greece loved her glorious names—her conquerors of Asiatic and Ionian lands. The heroes who made Greece, and the Elizabethan heroes who made England, would however now be put in a criminal dock, in gaol, and before Parliamentary Committees for cross-examination, and the results of their efforts would be abandoned to no matter what horror or brutalising or inimical influences, so long as their country and their countrymen for whom they had striven were degraded and disadvantaged.

But when all her hosts of bright names (the names of the glorious prototypes of those who now sing for us, fight for us, suffer for us, and when these also, and their deeds, and the memories of them) are put out by Socialism, England is to be "merrie" again; although

Socialism says to us, in the threat of an age without art and literature, "All the bright lights of heaven I will make dark over thee." This is what the Socialist is to do. He is to put out all the bright lights of our heaven, and he is to be "merrie" when there is "nothing but food and clothing to steal," and when neither monarch, nor millionaire, nor "official," nor any other will "want more."[1] Nothing but food and clothing anywhere. These are the intentions of the framers of the State we are invited to try.

Socialists are all practically unanimous about this, as about all their other views. The Fabian Essayists tell us that no one would be allowed to own a Raphael nor anything of any artistic value, nor anything which might be useful to the community, or be made more or better use of by others than by ourselves: "a printing-press," "a plough," "a set of bookbinders' tools," or "the lease of a house," or "any materials of industry," would be, "if privately owned," "as entirely wasted (not being actually used by their owners) as if they were subjects of a Chancery suit."[2] Everything that is valuable or useful must be freely accessible to every one. If we are not allowed even a set of tools, we must conclude that we should not be allowed typewriters, or perhaps even writing materials, because "the community not being responsible for their intelligent use, any interference on the part of the community might well result in no intelligent use being made of them at all."

A very crafty arrangement has been suggested by one of the Fabian Essayists for stifling thought by preventing the expression of it; indeed, it throws light

[1] Nunquam, "Merrie England."
[2] Graham Wallas, "Property under Socialism."

upon the statement that there is to be no literature, that no one is to use tools or a printing-press, and confirms our inference that a typewriter and writing materials might be equally forbidden—only it goes further, inasmuch as it amounts in reality to a censorship practically prohibitive of literature altogether. The suggestion is that printing and publishing is to be done entirely by the State—in fact, to be a State monopoly, like everything else; that if any man wants to print anything which the Government does not see fit to print, he shall have it printed at his own expense, the reason given for this being that people would not be benefited by trash.[1]

But it is easy to see through this crafty arrangement—this more effective censorship than any tyranny in suppressing freedom has ever yet devised; for not only could people not afford to print and publish their writings, but if under Socialism they could, their earnings are to be kept by the State in the Communal Bank, and any one who wishes to pay his printer will not have the money at hand, and will not have it given to him for this purpose; but the Bank (which is the State Bank) will pass the money from the author to the printer. Thus the payment of the printer will be at the option of the State, and work which the State has refused to publish—a State which has (of course for the public good) confiscated on a huge scale, and which considers confiscation just—will scarcely have any scruples about refusing to transfer the money to pay for what it objects to.[2] It is not to be supposed for one instant that it would hesitate to do so if anything were written antagonistic to the Socialist State.

[1] Annie Besant, "Industry under Socialism."
[2] Ibid.

Thus, we are told, "liberty would be guarded."[1] "Newspapers might be issued on similar terms," *i.e.*, the individual might print at his own expense, but would not be allowed to sell or make money by his book or his newspaper. Thus the only news and the only literature to be had would be such as the State chose to publish—that, and that only.

A truly free and intellectual life, and well fitted to produce a race of idiots capable of acquiring a plough, a printing-press, or tools, but incapable of making an intelligent use of them. We agree that it would be far more convenient and easier for the State to prevent possession of these things than to arrange domiciliary visits for interfering continually with their use. With the best will in the world, it would not be possible so to search into a man's life as to ascertain that he always made the most intelligent use of his pens and ink, his books and tools, or that use which the community might consider the most intelligent. Thus we are not to possess or to have anything in our houses which others cannot have, and which, if freely accessible to every one, might be useful to them, nor anything which the State cannot be sure is being used in the way it approves. This is the measure of the comfort, the pleasure, the freedom, the possibilities of hope and of attainment we are to enjoy in the Socialist future.

It will be no doubt a good society for the dolt, the materially minded, who will have everything material provided for them without care or anxiety of their own; and good for "the average man"[2] when "the scavenger and the ploughman receive an equal wage with the doctor and the engineer. But the doctor, the engineer, and all who are not scavengers and plough-

[1] Annie Besant, "Industry under Socialism."
[2] Nunquam, "Merrie England."

men, would do well to look closely at what sort of life is offered them before continuing to tolerate such legislation as leads to these good things.

Thus the contrivers of this new civilisation have not only made no arrangements for anything but material comfort, and decided to destroy everything in our civilisation beyond that, but have also planned the prevention of all which could promote the furtherance of anything except the satisfaction of physical desires and the repression of any efforts for a wider existence in the home or life of the individual, by rendering it absolutely destitute of everything which could make anything higher than this material dead level of equality possible. Socialist civilisation, then, is one disregardful and retardative of mental development.

The plans of its promoters are all of a nature calculated to defeat the possibility of struggling to higher things. Their whole aim is to establish an organisation of averages and mediocrity, to eliminate struggle and emulation, to provide for those who do not provide for themselves, to raise the lowest to the same external condition as those who rescue and raise themselves, and to put impediments in the way of those who strive after higher attainments. Their contention is that it is only when the body is well satisfied in every particular that intellectual life begins. When each individual is "absolutely secure of subsistence, every anxiety as to the material wants of his future is swept away," "when the basis of physical life is assured," "Humanity will rise to heights undreamed of now."[1]

From this the Non-Socialist dissents radically. We do not consider that the full satisfaction of physical desires (especially when this is cared for by others and assured to us without any anxiety or care of our own)

[1] Besant, "Fabian Essays."

is conducive to mental effort and development. We do not know what age or what society has given warrant for such a theory as this; it is the very reverse of all experience. Man is everywhere, and has been from the beginning of time, spurred on by the keenness of his physical needs to discover and produce. Ability has been developed in this way and genius has emerged.

The Socialist presumably thinks he has warrant for his assumption in the fact that many achievements of the highest value have been those of men who were not starving, but the actual condition of the early life of these is probably not at all accurately known; and we do know that one poet, at least, sung while he starved; that another (and he one of the greatest) followed the plough while he wrote his immortal verse, and that many of our greatest men, dramatists and others, have known the severest penury. Bunyan suffered from a state of chronic want, and was by no means in comfortable circumstances while he produced the "Pilgrim's Progress." It is not to be believed that, if man had always been comfortably provided for, if he had had no anxiety concerning his future or his daily wants, that his mental faculties would have developed at all, nor is it easy to imagine a society where physical desires were all fully satisfied by the care of others, producing, initiating, or creating anything intellectually great.

The Socialist, moreover, is fond of telling us that men will produce, no matter how you circumstance them, whether you pay them or not. Nunquam tells the artist that his work should satisfy him, that virtue is its own reward, which is scarcely consonant with the announcement that if men were better fed and cared for they would produce more. The fact that need spurs men on to effort and achievement, and that genius is

undeterred by circumstance, are destructive of the Socialist's position that men must be comfortably circumstanced before they can produce anything valuable to mankind; and that men will give all they are capable of without any inducements, or without that which they consider their due, nullifies their preceding contention that they must be well fed and cared for.

The stimulating effect which emulation, effort, and struggle have upon the character, which is thereby fortified and roused to such action and thinking as distinguishes some from others, Socialists aim to remove. Those persons who accept most meekly the equality which similar and equal surroundings and conditions impose, and who make no effort to get away from it, who wish neither to strive, nor to overcome, nor to win, will be the model citizens of Socialism. These creatures will be the type of excellence, they will be the pillars of the new State; those who will not tolerate circumscription, whose aims and desires will not accept cramping, tyrannical fetters, which tie them down to manual labour, to the "necessary work of the world," will be the rebels for the penal colony where they will have to do such tasks as are set them.

There has been some controversy as to what this "necessary work" means, some maintaining that it does not necessarily mean manual labour, but merely labour of any sort, whether poetry, painting, or anything else whatsoever, which the State may deem "necessary." In which case, of course, what is "necessary" would be determined by what class of mind the State happened to be governed by. Those who think that a healthful amount of rations is all that any man could need would scarcely consider instructive literature necessary, much less painting, poetry, or music.

Socialists themselves, however, give us a pretty clear idea of what the Socialist State will deem necessary work.

"What do you mean by necessary labour?—That which would feed and clothe and keep in comfort the nation if all took their part in performing it."

"Whence is wealth derived?—From labour usefully employed upon natural objects."

"Give instances of labour usefully employed?—Ploughing, sowing, spinning, weaving, &c., &c."[1]

This settles the question. There can be no doubt upon this as to what the necessary work of the world is, and there can be no doubt, when thus explained, what the Socialist means by it. "Necessary work" (especially as defined by Socialists) is manual labour—is the useful work of the production of beef, beer, and coats; "ploughing, sowing, spinning, weaving," *sequitur* butchering, tailoring, shoemaking, "to feed and clothe and keep in comfort;" and of this "necessary work" of the world all are to do their "fair share," for the "public weal is incompatible with the existence of consumers who do not produce." How many hours a day that "fair share" would amount to is differently estimated—some say four hours, some one hour and a half. One of the Fabian Essayists (these are generally considered the most moderate, and the best authorities) says, "The working day must be of eight hours."[2] Besides this necessary work to which the State would compel all men (really a complete system of *corvée*) every one is to do all his own necessary household work, for there are to be no domestic servants, domestic service "dehumanises" people. Every man is "to empty his own ashpit."[3]

[1] J. L. Joynes, "Socialist Catechism."
[2] Besant, "Fabian Essays."
[3] Nunquam, "Merrie England."

Now, any one who has any idea of what cleanliness is and involves, and the amount of daily work necessary to the maintenance of a clean house, or room and family, with even the plainest cooking, to say nothing of the making and mending of clothes and household appurtenances, and the times of sickness and weakness, when delicate persons or invalids doing nothing or little for themselves require attention, while their contribution of work is necessarily abstracted, and of the attention to children and the aged, will see at a glance that, without any eight or four hours daily of public or State labour, there will be little time left for mental occupations, much less for pleasure, as indeed the great body of the middle class (even people who keep one or two servants) now find.

Men will not be allowed to be so "snobbish"[1] as to let any one empty their ashpits for them, and as perfect equality in work, as well as in condition, will be strictly enforced, they will have to make their own beds, scrub their own floors, black their own boots, trim their own lamps, carry their own coals, and do their own mending, even if the washing and cooking be done publicly by *corvée;* no cup of tea or coffee, no toast, no eggs, no hot water, nor cold either, for that matter, that is not prepared by himself, for all the members of his family will have to do their public *corvée* as well as their own duties, and the duties for the aged, sick, and young will have to be shared between them all. The public kitchens, eating-halls, washing-houses, State nurseries and foundlings will no doubt lessen the otherwise impossible amount of labour for those who have other or mental pursuits, as indeed restaurants, clubs, and washerwomen do now; but it is not every one who can

[1] Nunquam, "Merrie England."

go out always to dinner, even if the dining-hall were only across the street, unless carriages were in constant attendance at the door. The invalid wife or husband, or the mother of young children, too young to be taken from her to the public nurseries, will scarcely feel it a relief or a lightening of her burdens to rise and dress herself and her little ones, and drag them out in the cold, in mud, dust, snow or rain, in order to sit down in a public dining-room; and besides her anxiety there would be the misery of the invalid at home during the absence of those having to partake of the cheerful public banquet.

Yet these "merrie" arrangements come strangely enough from those who scoff at "self-help," for people will have to be so very much more "self-helpful" (notwithstanding all the provision of foundlings, public nurseries and kitchens) when there are no servants, and when they have, in addition to home duties, to work at the public *corvée;* but that when every man does his share of the "work of production," when the earnings, and time, and thought, and leisure which are now devoted to mental work are given to manual labour, more and better mental achievements and more beneficial to mankind will ensue, or that even the present standard and measure of such work will be maintained, is an idea as paradoxical as it is inane.

The pretension is born of the consciousness that the proposed system does not provide for, and does not require, anything of a high intellectual nature; that it aims merely at material averages of comfort (which, in fact, it does not even seem to know how to arrange), and the production of them by deterioration of higher attributes; that it excludes all possibility of intellectual attainment; and as this is not a notion which can be presented to civilised mankind, or to any but

the lowest minds, the hope is expressed that out of the fuller satisfactions of the body fuller mental stature will be attained, and that such beings will emerge as compared to whom "the crimeless bourgeois of to-day is but a brute beast."[1]

The fact is, the Socialist, desiring to have that which he and his fellows have not won for themselves, has made plans for providing every one of their own way of thinking with physical satisfactions out of the wealth of others, and, having so done, maintains that such satisfactions are paramount as well as primary, without any regard to the fact that, although primary, they are lowest and least desirable as a standard of requirements; and he is then forced to try and justify this on the several grounds that no one ought to be miserable, that every one ought to have happiness provided for him, and that full satisfaction of the body will produce such mental achievements as the world has never yet seen.

Such views do not inspire confidence, nor can it be conceived that the civilisation born of them can be attractive to any one who understands what is offered and to whom the whole is properly explained; nor will they bear examination or explanation, for this will clearly show that anything founded on them will be as base as they are inane.

There are civilisations of different sorts and different qualities and degrees. There was a Greek civilisation, a civilisation of the highest rank and first and finest quality, in which every one strove for individual pre-eminence, in which freedom reigned supreme. The Greek was always on the alert for the assertion of his own individuality, always ready for struggle, he struggled from his boyhood upwards, struggle was a part

[1] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Socialism."

of his life; in the agora, on the field of battle, in all his pursuits and occupations, he was self-helpful and self-controlled; there was in Greece no forcing of all feet into the same-sized shoes. So long as this spirit was maintained, Greece held her own against the despot world, and Greece produced and bequeathed to posterity the splendid, the imperishable and still unsurpassed work which invigorates us and which the world still holds priceless; unsurpassable, as far as we can imagine in all that delights the eye, the mind, the soul of man. Such a debt of gratitude do we owe to these first poets, historians, philosophers, artists, that we never abase or change our ideal, but always strive eagerly to follow after those who struggled to the heights of fame, where still our eyes are lifted to do, if we may, something similar to that which they have done. By them and their works we test our own. Animated by their spirit, we have hitherto struggled individually each with each in the agora of life; theirs is the standard we aspire to, the *standard which involves struggle*, and to this transcendent civilisation of heroes and poets we still cling. It is from this we are to be cast down—down in heritage, in reverence, in aim; we are no longer to follow their example of struggling manfully along the dusty roads of life and springing joyfully to battle with the foe who would oppose our onward steps.

Another type of civilisation is that which seems now, perhaps, to be nearing the throes of dissolution. Far more ancient and far more stable than the brilliant Western star whose orbit has become ours, it has for an unequalled period in the history of nations ruled, and governed, and ordered, with equal exactitude the individual life of each one of its swarming millions, from

the prescribed length of its equal little feet to the equal length of its long pigtails. Its wisdom has thought of everything, and provided paternally for every petty detail of every petty life; and it is to this class of civilisation, of measurement, prescription, and regulation we are asked to descend! But China has had, and has, some literature and art of its own peculiar sort, which it cherishes.

It has remained for one of the most revered high-priests of the new creed of Socialism to preach the blessings of a life without either.

It is very noticeable that Socialists propose a complete reversal of everything we approve except the *acquisition of wealth*, even although this acquisition involves the continuance of what they fiercely denounce as one of the greatest evils—machinery; and for this wealth Socialists have such a keen appetite that they will even increase what they denounce in order to produce "more wealth"[1] than even Non-Socialism has.

With the exception of wealth everything is to be reversed. Everything we regard as vicious and pernicious, Socialists consider moral and beneficial. What we call vice they call virtue; our highest virtue, patriotism, is denounced and stigmatised; their highest virtue is to jeer at, to slander, to belittle, and to betray their country, if their own Socialist interests demand it. What we call tyranny they call freedom, and our freedom they denounce as tyranny; what we call murder they call justice; theft they call honesty, and honesty theft; thrift, seemingly forgetful of the meaning and derivation of the word thrift (thrive), like benevolence, is especially denounced, as are emulation,

[1] "Fabian Essays."

energy, and the struggle to excel and to overcome difficulties; self-indulgence is extolled and self-denial scoffed at and scorned; duty is the vice of vices altogether to be abolished, and the duty which begins at home is the worst form of it—it is selfish and self-seeking. We consider we are bound to provide for wife and child, and we hold him abject and base who repudiates this duty and leaves others to provide for those whom he is responsible for; the Socialist stigmatises this and ridicules the ties which bind husband, wife, and child.

Under Socialism children are to be the property of the State, which is to regulate and limit the number of them, and "to punish positively or negatively both father and mother who transgress in this respect."

Our ethic, in short, is fundamentally the reverse of that which Socialists are proud of inventing, and which we do not consider morality at all. The difference is radical, for ours does not only not propose happiness as its aim and end but, on the contrary, duty, whether happiness is obtained or not. Duty, however, is one of those virtues which, like thrift, is to be beaten from its position. "Duty," says Mr. Bernard Shaw, "is the primal curse from which we must redeem ourselves. . . . Woman is to repudiate duty altogether."[1]

We Non-Socialists are rooted and grounded in possession, in love of wife and child and home and country; we are self-centred while striving to be as altruistic as duty to those near to us admits, but find ourselves at every step and on every hand limited by the limitations of our nature, which cannot feel as acutely for those we do not know as for those who are near to us; it is this self-centre the Socialist aims at removing, and to which we cling as the staff by which we reach further and

[1] "Fabian Essays."

higher, knowing that if the strength of our individuality be broken, we are as helpless for others as for ourselves.

The Socialist's ideal aim is to root out the love of our own; ours is to strengthen and extend it. Experience and daily life shows us that those who most love their own love others most also; that those who do not love their own do not love others nor benefit them, and that there is no charity, but only ostentation and cold-heartedness, which does not begin at home.

The Socialist would leave us no possession to love. This love of one's own, of possession in wife and child, is seen rightly by Socialists to be at the root of possession of private property; the one is indestructible while the other exists, therefore duty is assailed, and the ties of husband, wife, child, and home are to be severed.

Socialists proclaim as one of their basic doctrines that man is not sufficient for himself, that he is not independent, and can only live in, and with, and for others, not for himself alone at all. This is the only doctrine of Socialism which is true, but it is a commonplace, although some Socialist writers make it the text for long explanations, and seem to assume that they have discovered and are in sole possession of this truth; it is a truth, however, as old as the hills, and acknowledged by all. Socialism, however, makes a very curious use of it. Instead of seeing therein the meaning and foundation of family and domestic ties, and the inseparability of such from the precedent truth, and the incumbency on man to provide in all his institutions for the maintenance and safety of all that which human helplessness and dependence has shown to be necessary, they denounce the whole of the binding relations involved as "hypocritical," and propose to shatter and destroy them. Domestic service, home, wife, and child

are all to have an end; thus the only use they make of this basic doctrine—the dependence of man—is to sever all his ties and make him dependent solely upon strangers, the State, the community, which is to take the place of all individual interests; and not merely the community around him or the State under which he lives, but the community of the whole of the nations of the world, which are no longer to be nations, but one world-wide community, and this world-wide community is to take the place of country, home, and all that home and country mean. This world-wide interest is all this dependent, helpless creature, man, is to have; he is to clean his own boots and love the whole world; no nearer, no closer interests; nothing which he is to prefer to the community.

The use Non-Socialists make of this basic doctrine of dependence—what we learn from it—is that we are not dependent on the whole world, but only upon a smallest portion of it, being but small and weak ourselves, and that only by strengthening ourselves within these our own limits of home, family, and nation, can we be strong enough to ally ourselves with, or be any use to, those who are farther off; and that in proportion as we make for ourselves ties which draw us nearer and nearer to the limited number we choose for our devotion and influence, the more we cherish the limited space we call our own, the stronger and more helpful shall we be to humanity at large.

We are not aware that any of the numerous Communistic Societies which exist have been ever at all helpful to the rest of the world; we have never heard of any Society or State, or one in which Socialistic ideas prevail, doing anything for humanity, or for any one outside its own community; but we do see that this much envied and continually maliciously slandered

England has been turned to and leaned upon by all those who were ever in need, and that it is to her still that even her defamers come for shelter and for help, which shelter and help, while reviling her, and while making the most strenuous efforts to ruin her, they still accept. And this very country to which all flee, all turn in their time of trial, is where the idea of home is strongest and most cherished. The contemptible spirit, which reviles what is accepted and enjoyed, is not only rife among those Englishmen who are Socialists, but also among those foreigners who, while preferring to enjoy the benefits of English freedom rather than live in their own country, devote themselves to undermining her institutions and preparing revolution for her by stirring up strife and hatred.

There seems also to be a deep-seated misapprehension concerning the "British Lion," which they are so fond of taunting. The ignorant and truculent often mistake the calm fearlessness of strength and silent contempt for fear, and think the fight has gone out of those who do not deign to notice that which is beneath them. People have sometimes herein been cruelly undeceived, and many a war has been precipitated which would never have taken place had the truth been realised, had the courage of the foe been correctly estimated. The Czar Nicholas bitterly rued the misapprehension and mistakes which had been made as to English character, nor would the Crimean war ever have taken place had those of our own land not belittled their own country. The tone of the German press recently and the general attitude of Germany have made it clear that the Kaiser William would never have sent his telegram to the Transvaal had he thought we should spring to arms, although it still has the mis-

taken and silly audacity, the cheap courage, to proclaim that our prestige is gone.[1]

We have Mr. Hyndman telling us that "the luxurious classes know they are only a handful of drones," imputing to them "ignorance and cowardice," saying that "among the middle and upper classes there is absolutely no ideal for the future of their country," and that "a chill shudder creeps down their backs while they huddle together" in fear of what is coming. It is a pity that, being so well informed as he professes to be about his countrymen and the "upper classes" in particular, he does not give us a little more information about their cowardice and these "shudders"; it may prove to be a pity later on from a Socialist point of view.

Unruffled demeanour has before now inspired imaginings of this melodramatic sort. The talented author of a recent work of fiction represents the English in decadence which he points to as already begun. It is to be supposed that appearances are delusive, that refinement and elegance of dress and behaviour are more interesting to the observer than statistics of health and longevity, or than the study of the habits of our athletes, and of the pursuits of our public schools and universities, of our Alpine climbers, our explorers, soldiers and sailors, who as yet have not yielded to any in exploits and in repute, but whom others strive after at a distance only. We have not heard that the lower classes ever lacked able, unflinching, and strength-inspiring leaders from "the luxurious classes;" on the contrary, whenever and wherever there has been danger and difficulty, these

[1] I point to Germany because it is from Germany that our Socialists and our Socialism principally come, and it is to Germany that our Socialists principally look for help and design to give help, and they are practically unanimous in their wish to advance German interests as opposed to ours in the Transvaal and elsewhere.

"drones," these "chilly," "shuddering," aristocrats have been always in the front wherever there was danger urging on the courage of the rank and file, whether it was fire in a London street or fire from a battery of guns.

There has been as yet no sign of decrepitude or turpitude either mental or physical among them, although some amiable acts on the part of some of our statesmen, such as acquiescence in the chance defeat of Majuba Hill, may in their disastrous consequences mislead shallow minds, and thus precipitate or create mischief; but these amiable acts were not applauded but denounced by the "drones," the "luxurious classes," who were as eager to shed their own blood and undo the effects of the disaster, as they were when they formed the camel-corps and hastened to rescue the deserted Gordon. One of these "drones"[1] begged in the desert to be allowed to cut his way through to Khartoum at all hazards, and was only prevented from risking his own life and those of his friends who volunteered with him by the prudence of his commanding officer. These "drones" have only been restrained at home from putting pressure on those who acquiesced in defeat by the large backing these had in the leaders of the working classes. Not the "drones," then, but those who hang upon the statesman holding him back, the Little Englanders, "are responsible for all that is likely to create loss of prestige, and to precipitate a general European conflagration."

It is probable that Socialists will not realise till the day of revolution what the "drones" are really made of; and yet the last half century has been prolific of greatness of the highest order in the so-called "bourgeois" class;[2] the valour of the soldier and the achievements of the philosopher and scientist have alike been

[1] The present Earl of Dundonald.

[2] Socialists call all the upper classes "the bourgeois class."

unsurpassed; there is no indication that the "drones" would not again unflinchingly lead the Light Brigade into the "Valley of Death," which indeed they may possibly soon have to do, if Russia continues to be left paramount at Constantinople and to be honoured by the wish of "Little Englanders" that she should occupy Armenia.

Nor has this "bourgeois" class shown any falling off in science, nor less strength and persevering endurance in investigation; and we ask, without fear of challenge, when has penetrating and powerful thought ever given more to the world than has the illustrious founder of our school of philosophy? While the names of Herbert Spencer, Huxley, and Darwin lighten the darkness and sustain the courage of the world, it will be hard to convince us that the "bourgeois" of England has not a winged soul, that it is incapable of its former flights, or that there is any failing or faltering in our physical and intellectual stature. Our Empire has not diminished, in spite of the recreant clamour and envious invective at home and abroad of those who would disparage it. We have not lost one iota of our position in the van of nations for all the cry of those who try to pull us back. We do not fail to meet our foe when it seems good to us to do so, nor is it generally pleasant to him when we do meet, although we do not undertake the meeting at the bidding of those who would like to see us fight, while they try to divert their armed neighbours from themselves to us by drawing us into quarrels or alliances advantageous for them.

It does not follow, however, that we shall always hold our own. On the contrary, when Socialism undermines patriotism and the loyalty of the army and navy, we shall be a fit prey for the spoiler, who will then stand a very fair chance of trampling us out and appropriating the

world-wide Empire, with all its magnificence of power, grandeur, beauty, and wealth, which the brain, nerve, moral strength, and physical courage of unquailing English "bourgeois" "drones" has won and maintained. This glorious heritage, which has been acquired and held by the moral force and initiative of these "chilly" shuddering aristocrats, may and will fall from us when the "bourgeois" "drone" is exterminated, or become a "Little Englander," a Socialist, when he abdicates and shrinks from his responsibilities, when he lowers his colours to a clamouring mob, whether that mob be of his own household or the armed foe from across the seas; and deservedly will he be cast down and despoiled.

Perchance, however, he will look to his footing in time, and decide whether he is a "thief" and a "drone," and what his accusers are, and what is to be done with them, and then raise his standard and plant it where he means to maintain and defend it. There has been too much paltering already; enough has been thrown to those who designate themselves "the wolves."[1] If

[1] The following is an extract from a speech by Mr. John Burns; it is taken from the *London Quarterly Review*, April 1893:—"The more the workers got, the more they would demand. The driver of a sledge across the Russian steppes was pursued by a pack of hungry wolves. To appease the wolves, the driver first tossed them his cap; but this was fruitless. He then threw out his mantle; but the wolves followed fast as ever. Then he gave up his provisions, which effected a momentary diversion; but the wolves were soon again by his side. Then he sacrificed one child after another, and last of all his wife; but the wolves, after devouring them, seeing the driver and horses in front, kept up the pursuit. In fine, when the horses were devoured, the driver, too, must rejoin his family in the stomachs of the wolves. The driver is Capital, the possessors; the wolves are the Socialists: the road across the steppes is the path of human progress; and the cap, the mantle, the children, and the wife, abandoned one by one to the wolves, are the concessions made every day by the capitalists to the proletariat—the reforms to which they are compelled to assent,

he goes on casting out on demand, whether from policy, amiability, or for any other reason whatsoever; if he flings away his own, one after the other, he will arrive too soon where his judges and despisers will end all that is left to him and of him.

It is especially worthy of note that thus Socialists designate themselves and describe their designs; that Socialism is spreading rapidly, and that the young are being trained "as wolves" to follow the property-carrying sledge; that the chances of Socialist success are (by continual concession of governmental privileges and influence, locally and otherwise, and by Socialist education and proselytising) being increased to a formidable extent; and that if their estimate of the resistance they will ultimately meet with prove correct, or if they underrate the moral and physical strength of the foe they will have to encounter on the day of revolution, a deadly struggle, and, as they believe, a not distant one, will be precipitated.

Conversion—patient conversion, in the meantime—is the task they have set before themselves, and their efforts in this direction are assiduous and unremitting. One of the principal means used is to promise to bring about a state of things which every one would like, but which few perhaps stay to criticise the possibilities of. We are told, for instance, that "horse traction will be abolished," and that then "the roads will be as smooth and clean as a dining-table;" while no one is at hand to remark that there are pavements upon which horses never tread, and that these are not as smooth and as clean as a dining-table, that they are generally covered

under pain of being themselves devoured. And, sooner or later, their turn will come. Little by little we shall take all; as soon as we obtain one liberty we shall demand another. The wolves, the wolves, you know—the wolves behind the sledge."

with dust and dirt; and we wonder, seeing that there are no horses on pavements, why they are not like dining-tables now. Then we are told that "the business of transportation is to be reduced to a minimum when goods are carried to communal warehouses, and distributed . . . by underground tubes." This last will, of course, lessen the traffic in the streets; but how will the transportation be less to a communal warehouse than to a Non-Socialist warehouse? And will inventive genius construct this tube system immediately a Socialist State asks for it? And why does it not produce it now?

Shopkeeping is to be quite "superfluous." That is because every one under Socialism "will be able to find at a glance what he requires without calling at a dozen different shops." It is evident the construction of the eyes and mind will have then undergone some extraordinary change, for even at stores, where every conceivable business seems to offer its wares, the purchaser has often much trouble to find what he wants, and certainly rarely finds anything at a glance, but only after much walking, seeking, and selecting.

"The abolition of that plague of housewives—dust, will leave hardly any domestic work to be done except arranging flowers, furniture, and ornaments." This is most miraculous of all—dust to be abolished! We know, of course, that Socialism is to abolish everything except money and machinery, but we had not thought of dust. We have often wondered where dust came from in places where everything looks fresh and green and rain-washed, remote from highways, and where in unused rooms and closed houses there are even no fires. If we could only have found out where it came from, or the cause of it, we might have discovered how to abolish it. Then with the abolition of dust, it seems

all domestic work will vanish. No bed-making nor carrying of water, no scrubbing of floors, no cleaning of windows, no blacking of grates or shoes, no fire-making, no coal-carrying nor emptying of ash-pits, only arranging of flowers and ornaments!

And as for "essentially disagreeable and disgusting occupations, . . . it is difficult to think of any that would not be performed automatically."[1] If household work is not essentially disagreeable, and if all washing, killing, cooking, and cleansing, wherever people and animals congregate, could be done by machinery, and even the work of the engine-room be made agreeable, the business of the sick-room when performed by a dynamo and turbine would no doubt be most beneficial and comforting to the pain-stricken sufferer, the servile duties for whom are perhaps more trying than any others. Their being eagerly and lovingly performed does not alter the fact that they may be "disagreeable and disgusting," and a "torment," which "torment," if it were shirked, would "bring down the heavens upon us"—Mr. Morris notwithstanding.

And as to the operations of surgery, "diseases and injuries" are by-and-by to be of such "rare occurrence" as really to put the dissecting-room and all that surgery involves out of the question. It is, therefore, quite clear that all work under Socialism will become "synonymous with intellectual and artistic effort." Preparing an ox or a hare for table, cleansing the slaughter-house and the scullery, taking off a man's leg or cutting out a cancer, dressing sores and gan-

[1] "If there is any work which cannot be but a torment to the worker, what then? Well, then, let us see if the heavens will fall on us if we leave it undone, for it were better if they should."—William Morris, "Useful Work *versus* Useless Toil."

grenous wounds, will all be equally pleasant and artistic tasks, and if they are not, they are to be left undone. We have this on the word of thinkers and poets.

Yet we are bold enough to assert that even a Gladstone (intricate as are the problems he has essayed to solve), if set to make such tasks as these pleasant, would retort that this "passed the wit of man," and that even those great scientists and thinkers who, like Herbert Spencer, have faced the Sphinx and not been unsuccessful in wrestling with her in the solution of many of the riddles she has propounded, would declare the Herculean labour of discovering how to make the referred to work "synonymous with intellectual and artistic effort" beyond them.

Socialism promises to think nothing of such little matters. It is clear that the Socialist intellect and ethic are wonderful things, but it is worthy of remark that no Socialist tells us how these feats are to be performed. He keeps the secret as closely locked up as the Sphinx herself does hers, and secures to himself the pleasure and the profit in the meantime of hearing, "Oh, Socialism is an angelic dream; let us be unremitting in our efforts to forward it."[1]

[1] The following concerning Socialism is what appeared in a recent number of the *New Review*:—

"In the first place, nine-tenths of the work at present required would be done away with altogether, for in addition to the enormous economies effected in necessary work by the substitution of universal co-operation for private antagonism, much that is now necessary will become needless. Road-mending and street-cleaning, for instance, will be a sinecure when the cruel, filthy, and unwholesome horse traction is abolished, and all locomotion is carried on by electric vehicles over roads as smooth and clean as a dining-table. The business of transportation will be reduced to a minimum when goods are carried to the communal warehouses, and distributed as required direct to the consumers by underground tubes. Shopkeeping in the present sense will be quite

Socialism, however, both in its preliminary necessities and demands, as well as in its working after inauguration, depends not only upon conversion to its doctrines, but upon the correctness or incorrectness of the Socialist's estimate of the human nature he will have to deal with. If men are to continue to be as they are now, if the human nature we have daily experience of (that alone of which we have any knowledge) is not to be radically changed, or so materially as to be scarcely recognisable, if it should be found that "the Have-nots" possess the same characteristics and desires as the present hated "Haves," Socialists would not advocate the proposed change except in so far as expropriation is concerned. But in this matter of the improving power of his system the Socialist seems

superfluous when everybody is able to find at a glance what he requires without calling at a dozen different shops, and to order it without any puffing or persuasion to purchase against his will. Quarrying and mining, ploughing, sowing, and reaping, butchering and bakering, plain wood, stone, and metal working, already done to a large extent by machinery, will be so entirely. Cooking and domestic work will be immensely simplified, for the former will be conducted in large co-operative kitchens, and the abolition of that plague of housekeepers—dust, will leave hardly any of the latter, but arranging furniture and disposing flowers and ornaments. As for those essentially disagreeable and disgusting occupations, which Anti-Socialists declare no one will undertake unless there is a helot class forced to do so, it is difficult to think of any that could not be performed automatically, without the necessity for any manual intervention at all. Even surgery which, however loathsome many of its operations, is not considered derogatory to the practitioner, will become gradually obsolete when sanitation has been so perfected, and safety so carefully ensured, that diseases or injuries are of rare occurrence. It is, therefore, clear that work under Socialism will become more and more synonymous with intellectual and artistic effort, a delight and a pleasure, rather than a toil and a drudgery. What developments then may we expect are to take place under such conditions?"

strangely confused. He says his principal plea for Socialism is that it will improve human nature to such an extent that the gravest ills we suffer from will disappear with the change that will be made in it.

Linked with his economic theory is his ethical one, which is at least of equal importance, for it is upon the strength of this, and this alone, he recommends his system, and upon this alone he bases all his hopes for its success. Man by this new ethic is to become so superior to ourselves, that compared to him "the crimeless bourgeois of to-day is but as the brute beast;"[1] the Socialist State is to come into being to effect this, civilisation is to be destroyed because it cannot do it; this, and no other, is the reason given for the cataclysm which is to remove property from one side of "the gulf" to the other; life is too disagreeable to be endured while there are "struggles" and "torments"; and as these struggles and torments must fall upon some (under Socialism upon all), and as that is not an attractive programme, the "struggle" and the "torment" must be got rid of. "I say there is no necessity for struggle" is the Socialist's dogma.[2]

The Socialist's only justification for Socialism, for expropriation, for equality, for compulsion, the only indemnification it offers for all this is the elimination of "struggle" and "torment," and the substitution of pleasure in their place. Nor would the Socialist tax his wit to find any other reason or plea for it; this elimination of struggle and substitution of pleasure for pain is to be brought about by the change Socialism will

[1] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Socialism."
[2] Nunquam, "Merrie England."

effect in man's nature: this is the Socialist's Alpha and Omega.

But now mark one extraordinary circumstance; just as we are beginning to exclaim, "O Lord, what fools we mortals be," not to be able to do for ourselves what the Socialist is going to do for us so easily, we are startled to find him harking back and telling us he will do nothing for us until we have educated ourselves, until we have changed our nature and thus got all these problems solved for him. The *Clarion* of Oct. 5, 1895, says: "The necessary education and preparation must be done first," then the "overthrow of this cursed capitalism" . . . and after that the "truer life." Thus we are to educate and prepare and alter ourselves, and to wait until we are prepared, educated, and are fit for the "truer life;" nothing is to be done for us till then. We are thus told first that Socialism is to make us good and fit for every blessing, and is to prepare and arrange all sorts of wonders for us which we have no idea of procuring, or of how to procure, for ourselves; and then we are told that we must make ourselves fit for Socialism, which *sequitur*, instead of giving us all these blessings, will receive them at our hands; when we know how to be cleanly, and righteous, and orderly, and just, and how to "live" the "truer life," then we may enter upon Socialism which was to be called into being for the sole purpose of making us all this!

When we have become fit for Socialism, we shall be desirous and able to seize all the wealth of the kingdom, to annihilate the possessing class, and bring all these riches, together with all the blessings and wonders our improved characters and intellects have discovered, to the Socialist, lay them at his feet, and, while doing so,

thank him and laud him for having—well, for having proclaimed he could do nothing for us until we had altered ourselves, and achieved under our civilisation all he has said he and his system alone could yield, and also for having enabled him to benefit by all the improvements we had obtained for ourselves!

It is a blessing we are continuously thankful for, that poets present us with the beauty we should never imagine, or at least not express for ourselves. To the minds of those who appreciate this, a poet is not (as the world too often sacrilegiously affirms) a useless being, nor is poetry a useless product; poetry is to such minds one of the most useful of blessings; this, however, is not generally admitted, and of course it would be inaccurate speech to call poetry the "necessary work" of the world; but "man cannot live by bread alone," and man is perhaps principally all that he is in which he differs from the brutes or the savage, by the help of the poets who have sung to him since the time when *juventus mundi* gave us its imperishable song.

So when in our suffering, and while we are receiving such consolation as divine thoughts confer on us, we are told to rise and steal, and slay, and overturn, and that we shall thus hear the music of the spheres and enter into Paradise, we resent it, and common-sense cries out, "I pray thee do not mock me, fellow-student." There is no doubt, however, that these fine promises do impose upon great masses of people; the tendency of mankind is to believe what they wish for, though it be paradoxical and impossible, and not to think, examine, or take trouble for themselves; people generally are quite willing to receive any good things which may be offered them, and to shut their eyes to the right or the wrong, or the how; and when they have nothing to

lose and everything to gain, they are apt to throw in their lot with those who declare themselves ready to put down the stakes on the table and to hand over the winnings.

If things go on as they are going on now, it will only be on the day of revolution that these dupes will discover that they themselves are to lay down the stakes, and that those who promised the winnings will not hand over anything. It is quite clear they could not do so, for, setting aside their principle that no man ought to have anything but the produce of his own labour, and that "if a man has riches in the bank, it is a crime sufficient to send him to hell," these winnings will all be required for the carrying out of the various improvements they have planned.

For not only is all the arable land in the kingdom to be farmed by the State as sole farmer, but much more land is to be reclaimed;[1] the labourers are also to be treated much more liberally, both as regards housing and wages; and much more machinery than we have, and of the most improved kind, is to be used. Now as farms at present would not yield the farmer a living, if his wage-bill were increased, and he spent more on machinery and farmed in a more liberal manner, it is obvious the extra outlay required and proposed would have to come out of the wealth seized, and that no surplus income whatever would be forthcoming from the land (no 2¼ per cent. as rent, which the landlord is now supposed to receive) for the nation in the future.

[1] And as all the land which is not too expensive to redeem, and which is likely to yield any adequate return, is at present under cultivation, and as things are to be done in a very superior manner to that in which we do them, £40 an acre will probably fall far short of the cost.

As also the State is to be the sole producer, the sole proprietor of all the businesses in the kingdom, and as the labourers are to have the whole of the produce, and things are to be done in the most magnificent manner, incalculable sums will be required.

Smoke, ugliness, and dirt also are all to disappear. In reflecting upon the cost this will involve, we must bear in mind the enormous sums spent now on even such comparative modicum of cleaning and beautifying as we do under Non-Socialism. Then the "dismal hell-holes" called manufacturing towns, we are told, are to become gardens of Eden; a factory is to be a "beautiful, intellectual social centre;" the noise and dirt and din of machinery are to be entirely absent; the interiors of the factories are to be as agreeable and as attractive as the drawing-room of the rich man; the hours of labour will be short, and the work varied and attractive, thus yielding very much less from a monetary point of view. The discovery of how to do this will, of course, have been made by the intellects and capability which civilisation has produced and cultured; but that is a trifle; it is enough that Socialism is to have the credit of it and the benefit of it; the expense of it, however, will certainly not be a trifle. Then, although there is to be a great deal more machinery, there is to be no congestion of population, and the whole country is to be smokeless, dustless, and green. This again is a conjuring trick, but it will be an expensive one; it might even be too difficult for Maskelyne and Cook, for if the population to be spread all over the country is to be pleasantly housed in fresh, pure air, as is promised, and adequate transport be provided for the then necessarily far more numerous industrial centres of the very much "increased machinery," and

if the land is at the same time to be much more extensively cultivated, as we are told it is to be,[1] and is also to be green and wooded as well, the wit of man, as well as his captured wealth, will be more than sufficiently taxed.

We poor products of civilisation turn in vain to science and to financiers to ask how all this is to be done; yet we think Socialists must have got them to solve these and similar problems already, otherwise how could they make such promises? How could they venture to say they would do things which they have not the slightest notion how to do? Streams always to run clear and unpolluted, machinery increased a hundred-fold, air always pure and invigorating, factories, sheds, and buildings of every sort nothing less than Greek temples, Gothic marvels, or something still finer, although as yet unimagined; for the "glorious art of architecture," with which civilisation could do nothing, "will be born again and flourish"[2]—spring a veritable Pallas Athene, armed at all points, and perfect from her father's (Socialism's) head! "C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas la guerre!" fell from the lips of Canrobert as he watched our Guards charging the Russian guns (these same Guards who are, Socialists tell us, to run down Parliament Street with a mob at their heels!). So we say of these alluring statements; they are magnificent, but they are not true.

Is there no expert in all the Socialist ranks—no one acquainted with farming or draining, or fencing and redeeming land—who can speak to them practically of possibilities, and give estimates of cost?—no one who knows anything about forestry to tell them what sums and conditions are necessary for the planting and main-

[1] Nunquam, "Merrie England."
[2] William Morris, "Useful Work *versus* Useless Toil."

tenance of trees?—no one to give any sort of an estimate of what cleansing even a small river might cost, or of what it costs to use or to carry off refuse in any other way? Is there no one who can calculate what sort of sums Greek temples cost, and what it would approximately cost to have all the factories in England (and an increased number for "increased machinery") rebuilt as Greek temples, and furnished and maintained as drawing-rooms and centres of social and intellectual intercourse? Is there no financier among them to calculate how much revenue they will have when there are no rich men to tax, and when all other men expect to have their taxes materially lessened? Is there no one to point out to what extent the army and navy estimates will have to be increased when "Kaiser William," or their friend the Russian with his friend the Turk, think they might as well (being humanity) also have a little of the land and wealth Socialists have appropriated? Poor simple-seeming Socialists! if they would only get themselves instructed in arithmetic, agriculture, arboriculture, chemistry, finance, and a few other useful little everyday things of this sort, and spend their leisure in observing the human nature just beyond their own doorsteps, instead of devising and disseminating promises and plans for plunder and for "bloody puddles" in Trafalgar Square, their friend the working-man would perhaps no longer "hoot" them and call them "fools and liars."[1] Of course, all working-men are not so rude as this; it is only the intelligent few who know a little more than their instructors who do it, which is remarkable, as intelligence is the attribute and monopoly of Socialism.

The possessing classes are charged by Socialists with

[1] "Merrie England."

the crimes of smoke, impure air, foul water, congested population, and all the evils accruing therefrom. Ground-rents and royalties are said to be the principal cause of these things, and the ignorant are imposed upon by this. But how do these evils really arise? Do they not arise in this way? Those labourers (not the possessors of fields and trees), who have been industrious, thrifty, clever, and energetic wage-earners, see their way to supplying some public want, or making some improvement, and with the money they have saved set mining, smelting, or other operations going which necessitate buildings, and buildings cannot be set afoot, nor be added to or increased, without land which otherwise would be pasture, arable, or planted, and smoke, impure air, and foul water are, as far as we know or Socialists can tell us, inseparable from factories. This does not seem to have struck the Socialist any more than the fact that rich men, possessors of land or money, do not turn manufacturers, nor even, as a rule, poor men connected with the propertied class, but only men, generally speaking, who have served long apprenticeships to labour, who are born and bred among wage-earners, and who only set works afoot because they want money (not because they have it already) in greater measure than their earnings and savings amount to.[1] To these factories agricultural labourers flock. Lads and lasses are not fond of quiet country life. Gas and the movement and glitter of towns and shops are to them more attractive than fields and trees, and so population gathers

[1] It would be instructive if Socialists would ascertain how many manufacturers there are who have not begun at the small end, and how many there are who, being possessors of inherited land or hereditary wealth, are manufacturers?

and increases round smoking chimneys, and there is congestion in "the dismal hell-holes," which the rich, however, have not made, and which the rich have done their best to prevent; for even ground-rents and royalties, although not prohibitive, might be thought to have a retardative tendency.

The Socialist sees the rich manufacturer, and he tells the poor man that the rich have built these factories, instead of telling them that it was the labouring man beginning at the small end, grown gradually by his own energy and thrift to be manufacturer, who built them. And thus is the worker doubly deceived. It does not occur to him that the rich manufacturer was ever poor, and struggled with privation, and he believes it when he is told there is no hope, no chance for him, the worker, the wage-earner, to do likewise. Thus he requires to be told the truth which is withheld from him, that the chances for him are the same as for those who have achieved wealth, that there is as much hope for him as there was for all those manufacturers or rich men who were once wage-earners.

The Socialist will find, however, when he comes to have more machinery that there will be fewer fields and trees, and that, in proportion as he increases his machinery, these will decrease, and that the more coal and iron he wants for his ever-increasing machinery and population, the more he will go on spoiling the fields and trees and greenery, although he tells the ignorant now that there will be more fields and trees and more machinery too. He will also find when he pays no rent and no royalty that the nation will be minus the rents and royalties, which will not prevent his increased machinery spoiling more vast tracts, but rather conduce to it, inasmuch as it will be less ex-

pensive to set works going. He now tells people that ground-rents produce congestion, but this is obviously the exact reverse of what they are calculated to do, for no man can think that if land can be had for nothing it will be less in request in desired spots for building than if a heavy ground-rent has to be paid for it; exemption from ground-rent, however, will make no difference to the fact that more machinery will require more ground to stand on, and that more coal and more iron for the increased machinery will also require more devastation of greenery, and that fields and trees will thus considerably decrease under Socialism in spite of promises of more trees and more fields.

There are some people who, according to the proverb, ought to have good memories. When Socialists promise more green fields and trees they should bear that promise in mind before they promise more ploughed land for food-stuffs; for ploughed land is not green, and cannot be walked over, but must be fenced and kept strictly from the public if there is to be any crop. It is strange that no Socialist tells his disciples that when England feeds her whole population the land will all be strictly enclosed, and that no one will be allowed to walk anywhere but on the high-road. It were well for Socialists to remember or to learn that to have more food-stuffs they must break up green fields (thus lessening the pasture), and cut down the trees, and that consequently one of their statements falsifies the other; and they might reflect that they have also promised to spread the population comfortably about all over the country, and that they have thus pledged themselves to break their first and their second promises; and it might be well to consider this before they proceed to break the third by promising more machinery

with which to increase their wealth. For as two things cannot occupy the same place at the same time, so there cannot be more green and yet less of it. The consideration also might not be irrelevant nor uninstructive that private property alone has stood between the devastation of greenery, the contamination of the air, and those who would "increase machinery" (and consequently increase coal and iron works), and that the private holding of fields and trees has thus benefited the public.

It is not surprising that the labouring man who has not much time for thought should overlook this, but it is remarkable that those who give their time to writing about it and teaching the ignorant should keep it out of sight. It would not, of course, strengthen their arguments, and it would altogether demolish their principal facts, but as they say they stand or fall upon truth and justice, it is unwise to risk what will happen when others point it out.

It might be simpler to see beforehand that each of these statements makes each of the others false, and not leave other people to explain that machinery must have land to stand on, and that more coal and iron for this machinery means fewer fields and trees, and less and ever less crop.

Can it be that the Socialist does not know that every rood of land in private possession is devoted to the production of crop, pasture, or timber, and that all that which is not so used is unfit for any of these purposes, or has recently gone out of cultivation because (without any rent at all) it will not produce crop at the price foreign produce can be had for?

It is easy, but not instructive, to say that if there were no coal and no chimneys there would be no

smoke and that the air would be free from fumes; but no Socialist brain has as yet produced any substitute for coal, nor any plan for warming the population and their dwellings without coal. It never seems to have occurred to the Socialist that coal is answerable for a good deal of the dust and dirt of our houses, roads, and pavements, and that, if he is to abolish dust, he must first abolish coal. We have not heard of any Socialist who has, in order to further this object, renounced fires or even open grates; nor has any, as far as we are aware, discovered how to cook without coal, or gas, or electricity, which all involve coal; nor have we heard of any Socialist plan for making these without coal,[1] nor for the introduction of electricity into every house as a substitute for the use of coal, nor for the replacement of our railway system by electric trains, nor indeed of any plan emanating from them for disposing of grease and dirt in engine-rooms and wherever machinery is in use. We only hear a good deal of vituperation of those who have not discovered how to do these things; but if instead of reviling he would kindly do something of this practical sort, it would materially help the people he expresses himself benevolently interested in and bring them on the road to believing that the Socialist was really of a superior nature, an able man and helpful; it would do more to convert us than all the fictions and professions which are so easy to compose and so easy to see through.

We have the assurances of Socialists, that as soon as they get the wealth of other people, their brains will

[1] We are aware that Nunquam has said that water instead of coal might be used in the production of electricity; but he does not seem to be aware that we know that already and use water wherever it is available.

become inventive and fertile, and that they will then give mankind what civilisation cannot give. It would inspire more confidence if they only conferred one single practical benefit now, if their brains only produced some one little thing that civilisation cannot produce. If, for instance, they abolished smoke, to do which one of their authorities tells us only requires "a little common-sense,"—only common-sense, and yet Socialism cannot muster enough of it to solve this one little riddle!

Why do they not "form a committee"[1] to do it, as they say that would be a good plan? Will expropriated wealth so quicken their brains that they could in committee after expropriation discover what they cannot, either in committee or singly, discover now? It would be infinitely better to be trying to do these things now than to be composing delusive fictions, devising means for "dropping" other people's money into their pockets, and for dumping £450,000,000 or so a year from our counter on to theirs.[1]

For of all their promises, this one—the abolition of smoke—if they would only fulfil it now, would be a cure for half the ills the working-man is heir to, yet they will not do it till they get rid of civilisation, or in fact till civilisation does it for them.

Education, intellect, invention, all are to come from us. Socialism cannot get on without all that civilisation has to give. We are to do the whole, and when Non-Socialism has produced all that Socialism wants to have, Socialists will appropriate the whole, and pulling the plums out of this rich cake exclaim: See how wise and good we are!

[1] Nunquam, "Merrie England."
[2] Bernard Shaw, "Fabian Essays."

Socialists do not profess to devise or contribute anything to all these improvements or to these miraculous measures; they only propose that people should get educated up to doing them, while they devise schemes for appropriating the result, and capturing these able people in order to compel them to produce all these fine things for Socialism. Not being able to find out how to consume smoke or do any practical thing of this sort themselves, they race after the sledge that contains all they want—the veritable pack of wolves they call themselves—until they shall be able, as they hope, to devour the whole, when they will turn admiringly to their sleek, comfortable condition and say, "See what we have achieved!" They do not, in fact, tell us how to do anything except appropriate wealth and share it.

Civilisation is to be destroyed for the wolf, Socialism, to "try its 'prentice han'" on human nature, and on the wealth which it cannot acquire for itself by labour or by its own ability, or in any other way than by brigandage; and to give the Socialist this chance of trying its "'prentice han'," working-men have "to be made to distinctly understand what they are entitled to have, and of what they are at present deprived," their ills have to be worried into painful sores, and these again have to be "prodded" to make the man fight;[1] the working-man is in the hands of his friends, like the bull baited in the arena with fire and prong; he has nothing, it is evident, on Socialist authority, against those he is to attack, so he must be pricked and stung, his wounds must be inflamed until his blood is aflame, and till deliriously he rushes blindly on his fate.

Socialism, however, is making great progress among

[1] *Clarion*, 1895.

"the classes," if not among "the masses," for as yet its promises have not appealed as strongly to the faith of the worker as to that of the well-to-do dreamer, who sees the suffering which is apparent on one side, and the material comfort which alone is apparent to those who are not thinkers on the other; and as cut-and-dried remedies or universal panaceas are not forthcoming from any practical person, but only from Socialism, the exertions of the Socialist will doubtless yield more proselytes, especially if the programme undergo as much modification in the future as it has lately undergone in *presentation* and *outward form*, and if all that is repellent is kept out of sight.

And the more the system is promulgated the clearer also it probably becomes to Socialists that the application to themselves of what they have arranged for others will not be convenient nor pleasant. It is one thing to deprive those you envy of their property, but quite another to deprive yourself or your friends of your own or of their goods; and one thing to propose to apply certain rigorous unpleasant measures to those you intend holding in subjection, and quite another to contemplate seriously applying such measures to yourself and your friendly adherents.

It is thus not difficult to divine that it will be found expedient to continue to eliminate gradually the more unattractive parts of the system, and to indicate that measures might be meted out with a difference. But a pleasanter representation, or even a pleasanter programme, will not alter the thing itself, nor make falsehood truth nor evil good, although fairer semblances may deceive more effectively.

Individuals of all ranks there are who would be the

last to be suspected of Socialism, many of whom indeed would resent the imputation of it, utter unwittingly Socialist ideas, and show themselves thoroughly saturated with seemingly harmless doctrines which they accept and assimilate without examination. People whirling through life do not give themselves much time for serious thought, and nearly all the light literature which comes into their hands is impregnated with Socialist doctrines. Property, marriage, religion, class, the old notions of *meum* and *tuum*, are all presented as something quite different from that which they have always been considered to be; a spirit of seeming benevolence pervades the whole, philanthropy and cheerfulness enlist the sympathies on the wrong side; a premiss, false but ably put, serves as the foundation for a whole tissue of conclusions, the real character of which would be clear were the premiss seen through, which it is not likely to be by the generality of readers—those who read not to argue but to be amused. It is only necessary to take up at random any of the Socialist publications to see the amount of ability with which the cause is being advocated and pushed forward, to glance at the number of editions such works go through, and at the long lists of the various pamphlets issued for the smallest sums and in the largest type, in order to understand how widely the seed is being sown and how far-reaching must be its results. This insidious feature is the most dangerous of the whole work that is going on so assiduously everywhere, even to the extent of undermining the fortress many think so strong. Socialists of to-day infinitely prefer and hope to be able to sap what would be difficult, if not impossible, to storm. The thin edge of the wedge is unfelt, but the leverage thereby attained is tremendous.

The spirit of Socialism, however, as discovered in all its serious or authoritative literature, is far from amiable; there rancour, intolerance, and malice surge up so virulently, that the reader feels as if the spirit of the Inquisition were re-arisen. This spirit covertly, but strongly appears in the "Fabian Essays," which are considered, and are generally represented as, mild and moderate. One Fabian author, for example, seems to think that if people were burnt alive for buying in the cheapest market and selling in the dearest, the punishment might not altogether be extreme.[1] This scathing spirit of hatred and intolerance, couched in not always ungentle or intolerable language, embodies to the mind of many a reader the ferocious spirit of the fires of Smithfield. But the utterances of less careful advocates exemplify the spirit of the whole. Mr. Burns hounds on his party by telling them that they are wolves, and teaching them how to act as such. Mr. Benson declares that if a man has riches in the bank, it is a crime sufficient to send him to hell. Nor is it to be imagined, if authoritative Socialist literature may be trusted, that any Socialist would hesitate to avow that anything could be too extreme either in denouncement, treatment, or punishment for the supporters of a system such as they pronounce ours to be.

It is in this same inimical spirit towards those who have or achieve on the part of those who have nothing, and who desire to appropriate the possessions and achievements of others, which is at the root of the repulsive paltriness and illogicality of Socialism. It appears, for example, in the misuse of such words as "exploitation," "hoarding," "bourgeois," "flunkey." Professor Flint has pointed this out in his remarks on Marx' definition of capital.[2]

[1] "Fabian Essays." [2] "Socialism in England."

Transparent as is the motive, the use that is made of the term "bourgeois" (*e.g.*, "bourgeois civilisation") is entirely misleading.

Even servants are, to the Socialist, as a red rag to the bull. Unlike the bull, however, the Socialist waves this red flag in front of himself, and when speaking of servants raves about "dehumanised beings" and "flunkeys." That a man who honestly earns his bread, and whom we may charitably suppose tries to do his duty, should be scorned and ridiculed by one who thinks himself immeasurably his superior, is remarkable; it is what generally we only have experience of in giggling nursery-maids and butcher-boys, who occasionally like hitting people who cannot hit back.

Socialism has even condescended to introduce "plush" into politico-economical treatises; it intimates that plush is a useless luxury wrung from the blood and tears of the poor, and that it would not be made if there were no "flunkeys" to wear it, and that there is in consequence so and so much waste of the national wealth! Why, it might be asked, is not some of this anger vented on "cords?" It probably would be had it not been discovered that the "proletariat" use the same material as grooms and coachmen.

The Socialist, in his anger with machines as being the property of the capitalist, denounces the rich as the users of machine-made goods, which he seems to identify with luxury generally; he is evidently unaware that those who can afford hand-made goods prefer them; and that it is the poor and the great masses of the people who make the special demand on machine-made articles, except, of course, in so far as the manufacture of the raw material goes.

It would be trivial to mention these things were

it not that there is danger in misrepresentation even of trivialities, especially when they are used to point the tale and intensify the fury against the accused, and that not only are certain things, but also whole classes (because they use certain articles or are employed by certain persons), held up to the execration of the ignorant as the causes in great measure of the ills which befall the poor. The spirit of hatred and malice which is so unjustly aroused by this rancorous misrepresentation may be useful on the day of revolution, as it is intended to be, but it is ferocity all the same. The real issue, it must never be forgotten, is England's supremacy or downfall, her life or her death.

The beginning of the end of the British Empire was hailed by our foes when the President of the United States recently appeared as the disseminator of a new Monro doctrine; and, again, when the telegram of the Queen's grandson opened the mouths of his gallant subjects, and we heard not only the hatred and envy with which they had long been swelling plainly outspoken, and of the concerted union against us of what Nunquam humorously calls "the great weaknesses." But a far more dangerous enemy awaits us at home—an enemy very strongly organised, and very fully equipped in a good deal that is necessary and paramount in skill and proselytising power. The utmost we are capable of will be required if we are to unmask and kill the most insidious and plausible foe that England has yet encountered; for as he who is at our helm says, What care we for the isolation of England? (isolation and liberty for us go hand in hand); for us isolation (when alliance means entanglement) is safety; if we are only true to ourselves and united—if there are no traitors in our midst to rend

our house and praise and encourage our foes—we shall be safe. England must wake up to the fact that her foe is here, on her hearth, in her house, in her home; she must learn to know him when she sees him, and require no instructive telegrams, Imperial or other, to awaken her in her hour of danger.

CHAPTER IV

JUSTICE

SOCIALISTS are pressing their system on the world on the plea that the civilisation they are going to put in the place of that which they intend to destroy is founded on justice ("the justice not of civilisation, but of Socialism"); and they are endeavouring to obtain recruits, and are appealing to those they would convert, by trying to prove this.

We ask, therefore: "What is this justice?" They reply, "The justice of confiscation." Justice is "thenceforth identified with confiscation."[1]

But we say: Justice is that which, broadly speaking, has everywhere commended itself as just and right between man and man to the most cultured minds of all civilisations, satisfying as nearly as possible the highest ideas and requirements of the Age and State, as the outcome of the highest wisdom drawn from sacred writings and traditions, and from the experiences of the most revered sages. It is the measure which the highest civilisations have erected as a standard by which to judge ideas or conduct, uninfluenced and unbiassed by self-interest or by any collateral circumstances whatsoever.

And we want to know not only what sort of justice is to prevail under Socialism, but also by what notion of justice Socialism is to be tried? "Not," the advocates of it say, "by the idea of justice

[1] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Socialism."

which reigns throughout the civilised world." And we say: Not by any newly-invented justice framed to support the new system by the framers of that system.

We deny that the Socialist's ideas and intentions embody justice, that there is any justice or any resemblance to justice, or the fundamental essentials of justice, in any part of their plans. The assertion that "confiscation is right and justice" brings us no nearer to the point. It only tells us that Socialists will resort to confiscation whenever the Socialist State sees fit.

Socialists talk a good deal about justice. They say it is "awful" and "implacable," and so on, but they give us nothing which can be taken as a standard to regulate, or judge, ideas by.

This question of justice is radical. Socialists have determined to destroy civilisation because it is rooted and grounded in justice, *i.e.*, our justice; that which they are to put in its place is built upon their justice, which is the opposite of ours. Hence, by this contention, they and their system must be judged; by this they must stand or fall.

They themselves say, "It is on this notion of justice that the crucial question turns in debate between the advocates of modern Socialism and of modern Individualism."[1] Precisely. But as the justice they refuse is that which is accepted by the whole civilised world, the *onus probandi* that it is inadequate lies upon them. Allegations are not sufficient; the *onus* lies upon them of propounding a definition of justice which the world can accept, of stating exactly what it is. Seeing they have talked so much about it, and staked their all upon it, it is strange they have not attempted to do so.

Instead, however, of this, they utter denunciations

[1] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Socialism."

and show us how they have arrived at their conclusions about confiscation and kindred matters in a series of astounding leaps, and then exclaim, "This is justice."

Thus: You are robbers. You have robbed us. We mean to take all you have away from you. You must admit you hold your possessions by force, therefore you must admit it is right for us to take them from you by force. This is justice, awful, implacable justice!

Now we do not admit any of these things, nor has any one of them the shadow of a proof attached, although Karl Marx attempted a proof which is lauded and clung to, but not eagerly defended, by Socialists. They are merely a series of unfounded statements.

The position we Non-Socialists are relatively in is analogously something of this sort. The shortest line between two points is a straight line ———. This has come sufficiently near the truth for all men to accept it as a standard, and it is stable. But up springs the Socialist and cries: This is not good enough for me. Your straight line is a line over which men crowd and jostle and trample one another under foot in their greedy hurry to arrive. Away with it! It is pernicious! Look here! This is my line ∿∿∿. This is the shortest line between two points, therefore it is a straight line. Hear him: "The only use of the instruments of production is to produce wealth and commodities," therefore "to the non-producers they are of no use," and "the only possible use of these means of production is therefore to violate the original bourgeois definition of justice." Conclusion: "It is just, therefore, to confiscate all private property in the means of production."[1]

Now the major and the minor premisses are here both false, and from these two false premisses a leap is taken

[1] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Socialism."

to two false conclusions. First, it is not true that the only use of the means of production is to produce wealth and commodities. The instruments of production are primarily water, air, fire, the earth and its natural fruits, and all these we use freely quite irrespective of wealth and commodities and their production. In the second place, it is not true that these are of no use to "non-producers," viz., to those who are not agriculturists or manufacturers, for all men, if none of them even produced anything, would still walk on and enjoy the earth and its natural fruits and all the elements; therefore it is not true that our definition of justice is violated; the premisses being false, it follows that the conclusion must be null.

The author of this baseless fabric, however, seems pleased with his crooked line, for he proceeds to try another similar series of leaps thus:—"The present possessors of land and capital hold possession of them simply by right of superior force, therefore "our bourgeois apologist can hardly refuse the right of the proletariat organised to that end to take possession of them by right of superior force," hence "it is right for them to do this in any way they like." The only question remaining is, How? and the only answer is, How you can, because "confiscation is right and justice."[1] This is "the shortest and most direct road to the attainment of justice."

To the attainment of booty—yes, the crooked line is probably better and shorter for arriving at so crooked an end, but we do not arrive thereby at any notion of justice. And again we deny the truth of the major and of the minor premiss; the conclusions, moreover, are false and irrelevant, for it does not follow that even

[1] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Socialism."

if some men had done wrong that it would be right for other men to do the same wrong, and to do it in any way they liked. The announcement that it is does not give us any idea of justice, nor do the following statements by the same author bring us at all nearer, for we Non-Socialists do not consider either of the ideas therein set forth embody justice:—"The Socialist's idea of justice is crystallised in the notion of the absolute right of the community to the possession or control (at least) of all wealth not intended for direct individual use. Hence the abolition of the individual possession and control of such property, or, in other words, its confiscation, is the first expression of Socialist justice." Here again false, ungranted premiss, consequently invalid conclusion.

Clearly, as Mr. Belfort Bax says, the justice of Socialists is not the justice of civilisation. Clearly also these enunciations do not give any idea of what is meant by justice. The process of "crystallisation" has not fixed or made anything clear except the desire for the wealth of others, nor does it form a definition or a standard by which anything can be tried.

Socialism, professing as it does to rest upon justice, must be tested by the existing ideas of justice, by some stable and acknowledged standard, and not by that idea of justice, whatever it may be, which the proposers of a new system invent for its support. Their system is not brought by Socialists to the bar of an inflexible, indefeasible justice; but justice, the crafty new Socialist creation, is brought wriggling and twisting for trial to the bar of the new system which is to stand upon it. The Socialist's argument turns in a vicious circle thus: "Confiscation is justice; therefore it is just to confiscate." And thus: "You, or some one else, stole some-

[1] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Socialism."

thing from some one or other, otherwise you would not have had any goods. You have some wealth, but there are some people who have not any; therefore it is right they should take yours from you." This is Socialist justice; this is what is offered as a test, an argument! Such tinsel may do to catch the eye of the ignorant and the interested, but no number of crude statements make a proof. And piling up one false statement after another upon a false premiss will never bring us to proof.

Socialists, then, refusing to bring their new ideas to the bar of our justice, and having no standard of their own—no immutable justice, nothing stable by which anything can be tried—it remains to find some standard which Socialists cannot refuse. Such a standard, we think, may be found in the nature of proof. Socialists will presumably admit that justice is embodied therein. The nature of proof has nothing to do with the question whether it is right or expedient that private property should exist; it only touches the holding of it in the same way as it affects other relations between man and man.

What, then, is the nature of proof? Its nature is to bring home, accurately and convincingly to intelligent and unbiassed minds, the truth of an allegation by means of such well-investigated circumstances and thoroughly-sifted facts as will form a chain in which not one link is missing, broken, or weak. Socialists would scarcely maintain that if any link in such a chain is missing the chain is perfect, the proof complete; they will scarcely deny that justice demands that every link must be sound in the chain which is to fasten guilt upon the accused, and that if even only one link fail or be unsound, guilt cannot be fastened upon any man, and consequently that the accusation must be withdrawn, and the man held to be innocent. We demand

that the chain of proof be perfect in all its links; not that each link is in itself and alone a proof, but that everything which goes to make up a proof, and is necessary to the proof, be there. Will the Socialist abate one iota of this if he is accused? Our justice is embodied, *e.g.*, as follows:—

Many men own similar things, and many men claim things by mistake or otherwise which they have no right to, and many are falsely accused. The *onus probandi* rests with the claimant. Will the Socialist follow so far? If he will not, the working-man will certainly not follow him; indeed, criminals would scarcely number themselves among the adherents of those who would deny that the claimant of anything must prove his right to what he claims, and that every link in the chain must be sound. Therefore we take it that the Socialist will admit this.

The claimant must proceed to prove his right—

First, By showing convincingly that he was in rightful and undisturbed possession for a certain period of what he claims.

(*a.*) That he is lineally descended from or in the rightful line of succession from the original possessor; or

(*b.*) That he received this originally lawfully-acquired property by bequest.

(*c.*) That he bought and paid for the goods in question.

Secondly, He must show precisely how and where it was stolen.

Thirdly, (*a.*) That the man in possession actually stole it; or

(*b.*) That he knew when he received it that it was stolen, in order to convict him as a thief or as the receiver of stolen goods.

All this, in both cases, is in the nature of proof, and necessary to it. There is no proof if one link is missing, or one step taken without such investigation as brings conviction to the enlightened and impartial minds of disinterested third parties.

This or a similar process is that which all first-class civilisations consider is involved in the nature of proof, without which no justice can exist or be administered; for otherwise the subjects claimed might be rightfully taken from the persons in possession of them, but be handed over to men who had no manner of right to them, to whom they had never belonged; or the subjects might never have been stolen at all, in which case honest men would have been unrighteously branded as thieves; and those persons who went about saying those things were stolen, but who could not give any of the necessary evidence nor prove these allegations, would escape being denounced as malignants and fools; nor would they, as now, be liable to punishment for attempted fraud, as persons endeavouring to obtain goods under false pretences.

Nor would it be sufficient to prove that some of the subjects were stolen to condemn the whole of them as unrightfully possessed; nor could the most undisciplined mind think it right to hand over stolen goods to any claimant who proved they were stolen without proving himself the rightful claimant. Without some such proof as the above-mentioned, the holder of the subjects in question could not be branded as a thief or the receiver of stolen goods; nor could the claimant be considered a despoiled or defrauded person, nor would he receive the goods, even if they were stolen, unless he could prove himself the rightful owner.

Now the question is, Does the Socialist accept this as

just, or as identical with justice? If so, the justice of civilisation is his justice.

But he says it is not.

What then is his justice? If any of the procedure before named is omitted, if any link is left out, will he consider the chain perfect and good as against himself if he is accused of theft? We must suppose he would require none of these links if he stands by his pronouncements concerning private property and our justice. If any of his friends are accused, will he dispense with any of the links in this chain? If so, let him stand up and tell the working-man which. If under Socialism a Non-Socialist rebel should accuse a Socialist of having stolen his watch, will the Socialist's watch be handed over to the Non-Socialist accuser without every particular link in the chain being scrutinised—without any such investigation as shall be convincing to disinterested third parties that this Non-Socialist was really robbed, that this was the particular watch he was robbed of, and that this accused Socialist is really the man who robbed him? No, the Socialist will not dare to stand up and tell the working-man it would be. He would have to avow that our canon of justice now would be his canon of justice then, that the justice of civilisation would be the justice of Socialism; and thus he would stand convicted, out of his own mouth, of having arraigned falsely the justice of civilisation, and of having repudiated it for his own purposes only when plunder was in question.

But if he would do so (and this is what he does where our property is concerned), if he is going to dispense with proof and the links of the chain which our justice demands, let him at once plainly say: This is my justice, the justice of Socialism:—

1st. That the accuser shall be accuser, claimant, and judge in one.

2nd. That he shall claim property in some one else's name and for that some one else, and shall keep it himself—for himself and his friends and those who think with him.

3rd. That no proof shall be required in the transaction, no disinterested third parties to judge.

4th. That all that will be required in his court shall be some anathemas and asseverations, and that then the Socialist working-man shall hand over his watch and his property to the Non-Socialist who claims it, because all wealth is plunder, and because the Non-Socialist accuser has no wealth of his own.

Let him say this now, without any circumlocution and logic-chopping; in all his newspapers, on every platform let him say: Our justice requires no procedure of your sort. Let him say this and watch the result; it will not be a pleasant one for him, for neither working-man nor pauper, but only criminals will follow him to Trafalgar Square on the day of revolution; not one will throw up his cap for him now, nor take off his coat hereafter for him and his cause. But he will not say so. He dare not. He dare not openly say this, nor in the hearing of the working-man repudiate our justice as embodied in the nature of proof.

Further, he has nothing whatever to offer in its place; he will go on talking, and (if we could only say to him, "Nobody marks you!") too many are listening and marking; but he is on the horns of a dilemma; he must:—

(*a*) Accept and adopt our justice, our chain of links; or

(*b*) He must reject the chain and say his justice requires no proof at all.

Lower civilisations, which have not got so far as to

think proof necessary, nor even to see the use of it, have conceptions and methods akin to those in vogue with the Socialist. A man is suspected, accused. Investigation? Nonsense; unnecessary. A. is poor, envious, and malignant, B. has riches. Tie B. up in a sack, drop him into the water and expropriate! Or C. and D. are agreed that there is something that ought to be set right. Cut off a score or so of heads, no matter whose nor how many; the more the better, preferably those of the guiltless, and make an end. This has advantages; it is rough and ready, it is easy. It is the justice of savages and of Oriental civilisations. It is also the Socialist's justice.

But there is a difference between the justice of these and the justice of Socialism. For the savage or the Oriental bravely accepts, frankly adopts for himself, the same justice which he deals out to others. It does not occur to him to claim advantages which he does not give to others; he expects the same treatment to be meted out to himself when he is caught, nor would he urge anything else, nor is he long-winded in defence of his primitive methods.

If the Socialist said: We mean to fall back on the methods of savagery and lower civilisations; we prefer to seize what we can get; we require no proof; justice is what seems good to us in the satisfaction of our desires, he would be as honest as is the Turk. If he said: We give you no 'standard by which to judge ideas and conduct,' because we require none and have none, and we are not unbiassed by self-interest, he would be as just a man as the Mandarin; but in trying to pass off his counterfeit as true coin, he stands convicted of having by a double shuffle so arranged the cards as to produce the king when the stakes are worth it, of

framing one law for himself and another for others, of sailing under false colours. For while repudiating our justice where others are concerned, he will claim it for himself; and while denouncing it he dare not refuse to admit that justice is embodied in the nature of proof; and he dare not admit that he cannot do without this justice of civilisation. For either he must admit that justice is embodied in the nature of proof and that he cannot do without this justice of civilisation, or he must refuse it for himself now, and for his system for ever.

If he repudiate it to-day and say, as he does say: The justice of civilisation is injustice, he cannot when he has secured the booty—for which, and solely for which, his new idea of justice was invented, and to which solitary purpose alone it is applicable—say: Now the justice of civilisation is to be the justice of Socialism.

If to-day he says: To secure this booty, it is not necessary to scrutinise every particular link in the chain, or to try the soundness and infrangibility of each, for this is not our justice, he cannot to-morrow, when he has gotten to himself the wealth of the richest country in the world, and when Humanity from over the sea appears and demands that which he has gotten for *him* and in *his* name, say: No, my friend, you must first prove your claims in the way civilisation dictated. I will myself test every link in the chain of your evidence to see whether you are the veritable owner of any part of this wealth; I will now make the justice of civilisation the justice of Socialism, and will not hand anything over to you till I have done so. I mean an *honest* man cannot do this.

But the justice of Socialism is a very curious commodity; it is produced for the producer's own use,

not for the use of others. For when Humanity, hungry and ragged, comes over the seas, and asks for his own, for what the Socialist long and loudly told Humanity was his, which he was getting for him (Humanity) only, not for himself and his friends—oh dear, no! for Humanity alone—when Humanity comes and asks for it, he will find the doors shut and barred; he will be told to go back whence he came, and get there what he can for himself or starve.

It has been already foreseen by Socialists that Humanity will come for his own when he has learned that the wealth of the world belongs to him, and has been obtained in his name, and Socialism has already outlined arrangements for keeping Humanity out of his own. Mr. Graham Wallace says: ". . . If all new-comers receive at once full economic rights, then any country in which Socialism, or anything approaching it, is established, will be at once overrun by proletarian immigrants. What is necessary is that we face the fact, every day becoming plainer, that any determined attempt to raise the condition of the proletariat in any single country must be accompanied by a law of aliens . . . stringent enough to exclude the unhappy 'diluvies gentium,' the human rubbish which the military empires of the Continent are so ready to shoot upon any human space."[1] This is the justice of Socialism.

The wealth that is claimed for Humanity is, by a "law of aliens," to be kept out of the reach of Humanity, out of the reach of all except the few selected persons the Socialist favours, *i.e.*, those who are friendly to him, and those whom he can advantageously compel to labour in his State. Socialists can only get men to seize the plunder by "prodding" them

[1] "Fabian Essays," "Property under Socialism."

with their justice, which is: The wealth of the world belongs to Humanity; so that when Humanity is sufficiently "prodded," it may, in delirium and frenzy of rage and pain, seize the indicated wealth; but that is all Humanity will have to do with it, poor fool! The Socialist will take the wealth Humanity seized for him, and will use it for himself and his friends, *i.e.*, for those who think with him; and those who do not think with him, and do not like his ways, and will not be governed by him or come into his masterdom, will have none of the wealth, but will be sent to labour in a penal colony, or to herd with those whom the Socialist does not choose to admit within his doors. Humanity, or that portion of it which the Socialist selects, must submit to the Socialist, or Humanity may go howl. This is the Socialist's justice.

Let us bring the Socialist's case to the bar of his own justice, and try it by his own procedure. He says some one is robbed, and he proceeds to proof thus:—

All land belongs to Humanity.

Who says so?

I say so. The proof is that I am here and have no land.[1]

This also proves that those who have land stole it; this also proves that I have the right to steal from them what some one else stole from some one else one thousand or two thousand years ago.

It also proves that I have the right to take by force all the land of any country I choose to name and give it to Socialists, *i.e.*, those persons who agree with me in opinion.

It also proves that, as the land was intended for

[1] "Fabian Essays."

Humanity and belongs to Humanity, *I* have the right to seize it and do as I please with it, giving such persons as I may select anything which I consider accrues to them.

Is this the whole of the case?

Yes.

Any further proof?

No.

Witnesses?

None. I have proved my case.

Truly simple. Justice made easy.

And no answer is forthcoming to the following questions:—

Who was in possession of the goods you say were stolen when they were stolen? Is the accused the descendant of the thief? Is the claimant the rightful lineal descendant of the original rightful owners? Are not those whom you say are the rightful claimants inhabitants of all parts of the globe? Have these deputed you to seize the goods you speak of? Do they claim them? Have you not constituted yourself, without any mandate from them, accuser, claimant, and judge? Are you not trying still to get a small portion of those who you say are the claimants to become claimants and to give you a mandate? and have you not as yet failed, after about a century or so of "prodding," to win anything of the sort from them?

It is clear these are, under the circumstances, very awkward questions, and it is not astonishing that the justice which demands answers to them should be disliked and repudiated by those who cannot answer them; for search as you may through all the voluminous Socialist literature, you find no answer anywhere.

It is also clear, first, that the justice of Socialism

requires no proof; secondly, that it considers assertion synonymous with proof, and so puts itself on a par with the justice of the Turk and the Mandarin, and that it is on the same level as that which is administered by Asiatics and savages; and thirdly, that unless Socialism, when it comes into power, is going to judge and condemn the Proletariat (to whom they address themselves) and Socialists without proof, it must fall back upon our procedure, and so stultify itself and prove itself a sham, a cloak for a purpose, which purpose it serves, and which serves also to show us what Socialism really is.

"'Tis not so deep as a well, nor so wide as a church door, but 'tis enough, 'twill serve!" It will serve to show us that Socialism requires no proof when men are accused; that it allows men to accuse one another and brand each other as thieves without substantiating anything they say; that it allows them to take other men's goods and give them to their friends, or to whomsoever they please, or to keep them themselves, without referring the case to any third and disinterested parties. It serves to show that the justice of Socialism is a fraudulent concoction labelled justice, to be made use of for winning men over to obtain goods under false pretences, instead of by the rules which the Socialist demands that he and others shall be tried by where he and his possessions are concerned.

The Socialist is so well aware that he has no proof whatever for his allegations that he does not make, it must be admitted, much pretence of giving any. He says boldly: You stole those goods, therefore we take them from you—this is justice. If it were not that he brought justice into the matter, saying that his system is founded on justice, that this is the crucial

point, and that he stands or falls by this, if he did not arraign and brand us as thieves, and invoke justice in doing so, it would be all plain sailing, and there would be little to argue about, it would speak for itself: We choose to say you took those goods, we believe you did; at all events we are going to take them from you. That is a frank statement which no one will trouble himself to discuss or controvert; means other than words alone can meet it. One learned Socialist authority, indeed, has boldly adopted this line. "You may call it robbery or what you like, but we mean to have your wealth." That is clear and candid, and requires no comment. We do not quarrel with it. It is dealt with every day by the police, and that is enough; but when Socialism takes to itself grandiloquent airs, and assuming the cloak of honesty and purity of purpose talks of the scales of "awful implacable Justice," seats itself as claimant, accuser, and judge all in one upon the judgment-seat to condemn us and destroy our civilisation and our justice, not for the sake of obtaining our wealth, oh, no! but merely for the sake of conferring upon the world the benefits of its own justice (which is the reverse of ours, and is to take its place), then we must unmask the thing, and show it to the world as what it is.

The Socialist has evidently a much lower idea of the "Proletariat" mind than the Proletariat mind deserves, and also of the "Proletariat" conscience as far as the working-man is concerned. But we can imagine the burglar and the garotter delighted and open-mouthed thinking: but why all this cant about justice?

What then is the position? How do we stand? We Non-Socialists stand on justice as it is embodied in the nature of proof. The Socialist—where is he?

He is first on one horn and then on another of a dilemma he cannot escape from. He falls first on the one horn when (having refused and denounced our justice as embodied in the nature of proof while meditating the seizure of property) he shrinks from saying to his client, the working-man, that he refuses this justice to him if he is accused. And again, tossed up from this horn, he alights on the other when he accepts our anathematised justice in demanding our proof when he or his friend is accused, while building his system on the antithesis of it, and calling this antithesis justice. He is thus impaled on one horn or the other of this unavoidable dilemma.

And his system is convicted of fraud, inasmuch as it passes off as justice that which is the reverse of the justice it will claim for its adherents.

The Socialist has refused our justice, and he will seize our goods; but Humanity is lying in wait for him as, tossed from the one horn, he turns his somersault in the air, and comes down clinging to our justice.

Humanity from over the seas? Your claim? Pshaw! Away with you! You are no use to us.

Thus he alights on the other horn of his double dilemma. For while pretending that Humanity made a claim, and posing as the champion of Humanity, he seized goods under pretence of delivering them, when Humanity comes for his own he will not deliver without proof, nor at all. He will not now nor at any time say he will.

Confiscation is justice to-day for Socialists for their own purposes; but confiscation at the hands of Humanity, when they have the land and the wealth which belongs to Humanity, will not be justice to-morrow. Having obtained the wealth of civilisation, they will fall back on the justice of civilisation, and will refuse

to give it up even to their own rightful claimant, Humanity, the scarecrow they have set up and declared to be the rightful owner, but to whom they have no intention of giving their own. Their declared intention is to give it to their own friends, the Socialist majority.

It follows that, as their system is based on a proposed action which sets the principle of proof at defiance to-day but acts upon it to-morrow, so it is based not on the eternal rock of justice, but upon the shifting sand of time-serving invention, which invention will not even last over the hour in which the purpose it was invented to serve is accomplished, which they will not even make the slightest attempt to maintain the day after they have, by its help, obtained their desire—the wealth of others.

They will not dare to say they would. They may throw a good deal of dust about in which a windy evasive answer may pass muster with those who would rather have darkness than light, but a plain avowal they will not give. They will not say they will give the expropriated land and wealth to Chinamen, Boers, or Zulus, and they cannot maintain that these are not Humanity, or that Socialists only are Humanity.

There are other instances which might be given to show that the boasted justice of Socialism has no resemblance to justice. Prescriptive right is denounced. The Socialist pours forth all his thunder of malediction upon right founded upon undisputed possession for a certain number of years.

It is obvious, to those who require proof, that if any one is wronged he will as a rule claim while the wrong is not only at its sorest but while witnesses are alive to substantiate the allegation, that the fact that no allegation is made under the most favourable circum-

stances for proving the wrong and obtaining one's own, is in itself some evidence that there is no wrong; interests must be less keen after a number of years have passed away, and if they were not pushed when every chance was in their favour, there would not be so much likelihood of successfully proving them when witnesses were dead and facts forgotten, and when a just judgment could hardly be arrived at for want of proofs and of knowledge. The question would press itself: Why these claims were not made good when it was so much easier to prove allegations? If claims were allowed to be pressed when everybody who knew anything at all about the matter was dead or out of the way, life would not be long enough to settle such very complicated and suspicious cases which, after all, it would be impossible to arrive at any accurate knowledge of. In Morocco or the Andaman Islands, or any place where no proofs were required, it might be simple enough; and it is the administration of the sort of justice which prevails in such places which Socialism seems to revert to and aim at.

There is another principle inherent in our ideas of justice which Socialism antagonises. We hold it to be an essential element of justice that individuals who do not transgress the laws of their country, whose lives and actions are in accordance with its customs, shall be held to be guiltless, honest, and honourable, and that those who do transgress shall be counted criminals or transgressors. Socialism repudiates this *in toto*. Socialists consider that, although men may have lived in accordance with law, custom, and teaching, they may still be branded as criminals, upon whom it is right to wreak their fury and the extremest punishment; and that those who have transgressed law, cus-

tom, and teaching are not responsible and are to be held guiltless. This is the justice of the Socialist.

There is yet another instance which points in the same direction—that of majorities. It is held by us that if a country is governed by a majority, the majority shall mean the majority of the nation or of those who have votes; but Socialist justice dictates that a majority shall mean a majority of Socialists merely; and not those of England only, but a majority made up of German, French, or Belgian Socialists or those of any other nationality, of any foreigners, in fact, whom the Socialist may select to help him to govern England. This is not always plainly put in popular literature, but it is an integral part of Socialism. Mr. Belfort Bax puts it quite clearly:—"The only public opinion, the only will of the majority which has any sort of claim on the recognition of the Socialist in the present day, is that of the majority of those who have like aspirations with him; . . . in other words, the will of the majority of the European Socialist party."[1] Thus when Socialists establish their system in England, the government will be carried on, not by a majority of Englishmen, nor even by Socialist Englishmen, but by a majority of foreign Socialists.

The working-man is invited to pull down the institutions of his country, in order that he may govern it and have things his own way; but he is not told in any of the literature which comes in his way that he will not govern at all, but will be governed by a majority of Socialists who will certainly be foreigners. It is not pointed out to him that the Socialists of foreign countries will far outnumber the Socialists of England and that it is the will of these that will pre-

[1] "Ethics of Socialism."

vail, and not the will of the English working-man. This is the justice of Socialism.

It also speaks ill for the chances poor Humanity has with the Socialist. "The will" of Humanity is not to have "any sort of claim on the recognition of the Socialist," for only the will of the European Socialist party is to have claim or recognition; yet clearly "Humanity" is the majority; but this majority is declared by Socialist justice to have no claim and no right to recognition, although it may call for its own goods, the wealth the Socialist secured in the name of Humanity as belonging to Humanity.

Thus the will of Humanity, the Socialist says, his justice demands that he ignore.

And the wealth of Englishmen and of Humanity, his justice demands, shall belong to the European Socialist party.

Humanity and Englishmen are nowhere.

This is the justice of Socialism.

I have now completed my case against the justice of Socialism. I stand at the bar of our justice—of the universal justice of civilisation, and I plead, and I think I have proved, that there is no justice anywhere in the greedy whirl of the eddying maelstrom of Socialism, which, if we do not avoid its pernicious eddies, will suck us in, and engulph and drag us down to unavoidable perdition.

I arraign the justice of Socialism as a fraud, and, in pursuance of the proofs I have adduced, I ask for a verdict of guilty.

CHAPTER V

CLASS

One of the most prominent features of Socialism is its proposed so-called abolition of Class, which consists, however, in a scheme for instituting the absolute domination of one class, and the subjection of all other classes to this one. For the proposal is that the working class shall be the one and only class considered or recognised in any way, and that all the other classes shall be compelled to do a share of the "necessary" work of the world.

The whole Socialist system is framed with the avowed primary object of instituting a Government by one class—the working class—and this class is to be supreme. All other classes, *quâ* classes, are to be exterminated. Socialists are unanimous in their intention to legislate for one class only; their arrangements are all made for the benefit of this one, and "the workers are to have the best of everything."[1]

We find in a catechism for supposed neophytes: "Do they not wish the workers to control the State?—Certainly they do."

Is not this the supremacy of a class?

"No. When all are workers, the workers will be no longer a class, but a nation."[2]

Here we have an inevitable acknowledgment and a

[1] Besant, "Fabian Essays."

[2] J. L. Joynes, "The Socialist Catechism."

direct denial of it by a sophism, a subterfuge; this shall be made plain primarily and principally by their own words.

Mr. Belfort Bax says: "The educated workman knows that human progress is bound up with the ascendancy of his class."[1]

And ". . . let us take as types a Harcourt or a Goschen. . . . Such men are lumps of class feeling. A hypocritical vulgarity has in them absorbed humanity. Human life would be manifestly impossible were the whole middle class transformed into Harcourts and Goschens. . . ."[2]

"The classes who live in idleness on the fruits of the labour of other people would be improved off the face of the earth, every one being obliged to take his share of honest work."[3]

"The chief superiority of the working class as a class over the middle class comes into view."[4]

It will probably be decided that the ascendancy of this labour class speaks for itself; nor is it to be imagined that Socialism intends to give the best of everything to those persons whom they call "lumps of class feeling," even although they might work manually for several hours a day, nor that doing their "share of the necessary work of the world" would make their tone of mind more acceptable to Socialists.

Thus Socialism, as propounded by all the learning it commands, is purely and avowedly for the benefit of the working class only; hence it is essentially a class system; and its claim to be free of class feeling and to abolish class means merely to ignore all classes but one.

It is essentially a levelling down system, the reverse

[1] "Ethics of Socialism." [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid. [4] Ibid.

of ours, which levels up, for all are to be labourers, doing "the *necessary* work of the world." But this stupendous effort to level down will of course only crush liberty not class; for unless there are to be no—*e.g.*—doctors, no officials, none more educated, cleverer, and brighter than others, these will form classes, to say nothing of the refusal of certain minds to abnegate their right to choose their own associates. Socialism will simply (by equality of payment, by rigorous repression of everything unequal in condition and surroundings, and by other measures of this sort) prevent any one from rising above the rank of a labourer, and thereby prevent that free development which conduces to superiority of intellect. Socialists do not propose that the labourer shall cease to be a labourer, only that he shall have some of the money which other people's ability produces; they seem to confound class with money instead of regarding it as only very partially and indirectly determined by money; he denounces the banefulness of superiority—and by equality of condition he hopes effectually to get rid of superiority and inferiority —whether of culture, refinement, or condition.

But class is not synonymous with money, and equality of condition does not always go hand in hand with money; class and class feeling exist as strongly (and often even in a greater degree) where Socialists see one homogeneous class only as it does in the classes he denounces, the members of which he regards as "mere lumps of class feeling," for nowhere is class feeling stronger than among wage-earners and the poor. Those who have any acquaintance with these know that they *select* their acquaintance, and will by no means hob-nob with every neighbour; the artisan and his family do not associate with any everyday labourers they are thrown into juxta-

position with; nor does the labourer think the tramp, the organ-grinder or the jail-bird fit for his acquaintance, but both artisans and labourers draw lines and distinctions which the astonished outsider fails to appreciate, or even to see. Again, the butcher may be rich and clever, but his money and his cleverness do not place him in the society of barristers or in naval and military circles. Or the physician's daughters may be left penniless and be earning their daily bread for wages less than factory hands receive; their wages will determine their condition and surroundings, which will thus be equalised (in every particular which money effects) with those of the factory girl, but notwithstanding this they will visit and marry in their own class. While there is liberty there will be class; to deprive people of money will not touch class; therefore the Socialist proposes to enforce equality of work and equality of condition, each of which involves loss of liberty, through which alone he could ever hope to affect class.

But this impossibility of abolishing class without abolishing character, intellect, and freedom does not involve the admissibility of the Socialist propositions that there is a gulf between the classes, or a complete social separation, or a fixed line, and that class in England prevents a man rising from his own class into another, which are all the reverse of fact.

In England every one can rise, if he is capable, from his own class into any other class he chooses; under Socialism no one will be able to rise, for there will only be one class and all will be equal. The anathematised "Plutocrats" of civilisation have nearly all risen from the lowest ranks, certainly almost all those who have made exceptionally large fortunes. The

Rothschilds, on Socialist authority, had not a sixpence eighty-five years ago; and there is no one, however limited his circle or his information may be, who cannot put his finger on the name of some magnate who has been a working-man. It is open to every one of us and to every working-man to do likewise, to rise to any sphere he chooses; he is never shut out from any. Representations to the contrary are arbitrary statements unsupported by facts.

One Socialist pamphleteer says there is no country in the world where it is so impossible to rise. "In no country is it so difficult for a man to rise out of the wage-earning class; and in no country is there such a complete social separation between classes."[1]

We suppose this gentleman is very much better informed about the customs of other countries (although it is difficult to divine which) than he is about those of his own. If we may judge by such pronouncements, Socialism does not seem to know much of what goes on in England nor abroad.

A recently deceased baronet, an active promoter of many of the most magnificent and useful scientific schemes of the day, such as the laying of the Submarine Atlantic Cable, the execution of the Suez Canal, and of docks and railways in England, in all of which his knowledge and experience was of great value, a man of large wealth, of varied talents, a public benefactor and received by those high in place and power, was originally a pit-boy.[2] Disraeli, the leader of the House of Commons and Prime Minister of England began life in a lawyer's office. The names of those who have done similarly are innumerable; their biographies fill volumes.

[1] H. M. Hyndman, "The Coming Revolution in England."
[2] Sir George Elliot, grandfather of the present Baronet.

Yet the Socialist tells the working-man there is no hope for him, that he cannot rise, because our class system shuts him out. A more extraordinary statement never was penned, as the long list of those who have risen from penniless workers to positions of eminence in society and in the State proves.

In other countries there are lines which cannot be overpassed. In Germany those who are not noble are not received at court nor in the society of the titled, nor are those who have risen from labour, or even from trade and commerce; and officers in the army are not allowed to marry the daughters of those engaged in mercantile pursuits. Distinguished men holding official posts, not being noble, may be received by their sovereign, but their wives and families are rigorously excluded from court and from society. In Austria the line is even more severely drawn. In England the doors of the sovereign and of the greatest houses are open to all who distinguish themselves or can conform to the prevalent order. There is here no line whatever dividing class from class which cannot be passed. But the Socialist, while determined that there shall be no class higher than that of the manual labourer or of the scavenger, and that there shall be no possibility of the scavenger or labourer rising, and, while providing (in order to ensure this) that there shall be nothing higher to rise to, seems notwithstanding very anxious to be admitted to the society of those who are not known to him, of indeed those towards whom he has sworn enmity, and whom he speaks of with contempt. Their good things and their kindness may be extended to him as to their chosen associates, but it is only an aggravation of his grievance if he is offered these without being introduced to a number of those hated

"gradgrinds" whom he professes to despise. Socialists evidently like being lifted, but do not like any one else to be lifted, nor that any one should raise himself from one class to another.

We read in the pamphlet previously referred to, "The Coming Revolution in England," that "Not long ago a great capitalist—a member of the present Liberal Government—gave an entertainment to the representatives of the working-men's clubs of London at South Kensington Museum. It was all very nice, I am told; but the tone of the *fête* was pretty much the same as it must have been at a gathering called by a feudal lord of olden time, when he condescended to regale his retainers with a roasted ox and 'fixings.' Not a single middle-class or upper-class man was asked."[1]

Now it would be interesting to the working-man to hear, if the representatives of the workmen's clubs have "a right" to expect to dine with the "upper and middle classes," what answer would be given to the tramp and the criminal who claimed on this ground to be invited to meet those representatives; and equally interesting to give another banquet to these representatives, and to let them know that the persons invited to meet them were scavengers, ploughmen, or vagrants, and to hear how many would accept this invitation, and what they would say to "the right" of these people to "social equality" with them, and how they would feel concerning the proposed arrangement. We venture to think they would decline the honour; and we venture also to think that those who entertain the poor (as "the upper classes" do continually) would, in common with those they entertain, inform us, without one dissentient voice, that not only do they upon such occasions frequently sit down

[1] Hyndman.

with the working-man, but that never does the working-man sit down with vagrants and criminals.

Yet it is, Socialists say, to gain social equality for these that they are fighting, and it is difficult to see why, on Socialist principles, they should not be invited to meet their (we suppose) own representatives, or why these representatives should claim and want to be invited to meet men upon whom they profess to pour scorn and contempt. To be just, however, we do not know, and do not think, they do expect it; it is only the Socialist who claims as a right the acquaintanceship of those he professes to despise.

Socialists seem strangely ignorant of the relation between "the upper classes" and the poor, and of the feelings of the working-man.

But, with the intensity of its general levelling down, it is not to be overlooked that there are two favoured classes who are to be, by Socialism, distinctly levelled up. Paupers and criminals are to be raised to the ranks of the workers. With the exception of these, every class and every one in all classes, will be levelled down to the working-man, who will not be levelled up, for there is to be nothing above him to level him up to. Paupers and criminals, however, benefit very decidedly, for they are to be raised, while all others are to be lowered, to the one chosen class—the working class.

Herein we again see how much envy has to do with Socialist plans, for the working class who cannot awaken either greed or envy so long as the individuals of it are kept in their places by the Socialist and not allowed to rise from it, is the chosen class; it is only when, by their ability, they raise themselves above the rank of manual labourers and thus arouse envy that they become objects of dislike; and the most favoured classes

of all, paupers and criminals, are those who, by no possibility whatever, could be thought of as likely to raise themselves to any position which could arouse the envy or covetous desire of any one. To each, therefore, not according to his deserts, but according to his position relatively to the *Socialist's ideas* of position; this disadvantage to the working-man of having those below him so favoured has never been put before him, and as he is not called a working-man, but a "proletaire," it has probably escaped his notice. He is taught to be discontented and offended with the present system if he is feasted without the company of persons he does not know; and he is possibly gratified at the prospect which is held out to him of being hail fellow and well met with persons whom he now looks at from a distance; but he has never been told and has not realised that he will, under Socialism, have to sit cheek by jowl with those whom nothing will induce him to associate with now, and that there will be a great jostling and elbowing for places if he is to escape company which he dislikes and avoids, and strives for location with those whom he would prefer to be near.

There will be no reserved seats under Socialism. The criminal and the vagrant (who will then, to all intents and purposes, be what they are now, except that they will have more money in their pockets) will expect to be invited with the artisan, especially as they are being assiduously educated in the belief that they are all one class with the workman. The Socialist, it is true, assumes that they will not be the same, but that is an assumption merely, and an assumption which involves equality of character, and which proves that equality of character is expected and aimed at by equality of condition.

The Socialist theory that, when all are workers, the workers will not be a class, does not prove that there will be none of the class feeling which makes class; it only indicates that nothing but manual labour will have recognition by the State; that—*e.g.*—literary and scientific men, authors, doctors, astronomers and others, who would naturally form literary or scientific classes, will be disabled from doing so outwardly by reducing them to labourers who produce the material necessities of life, by which means they will be retarded in their studies to the extent which would necessarily separate them from labourers; thus the subject classes will be all those who follow, or strive to follow, other pursuits than labour; and the dominant class will be the labouring class, those who do not strive for anything beyond the work they are obliged to do; and these would primarily be those who are now the lowest class of workers, and all such as are unskilful, intemperate, and shirkers of all work which they are not absolutely obliged to do to keep them from starving.

Yet although you may force those you have in your power to work manually, whether by nature they be poets, artists, thinkers, explorers, philosophers, musicians, idlers, or scientists, and subject them to your dominant class of manual workers, you cannot force them to associate with those whom they do not choose to associate with, unless your tyranny be of a much more slave-driving sort than that which it even professes to be in compelling all men to equality of condition and to the production of the necessaries of life.

There are, however, indications in Socialist literature that petty tyranny of one individual over another (such as we see when Socialist strikes are in force, and

workmen are organised to insult and injure those workmen who disagree with them, and to break and damage their tools) would be encouraged, and toadyism thereby fostered.

In speaking of class feeling, I am not alluding to the pride of any particular class, or of the reluctance of "the classes" to mix with "the masses" (if I may use such hatred-arousing nomenclature innocently), I have no doubt Socialists would find means of dealing with anything they disliked in the classes to be levelled down; nor am I impeaching the intensity of the Socialist will, nor its capability of equalling its power; for while aware that it is highly probable that those whom the Socialist calls "bourgeois" might object very strongly to associate with those whom they do not care for and whom they think beneath them, it is not always possible to shut one's eyes to facts which the Socialist does not find it convenient to see, such as the intense class feeling existing among the lower and labouring classes.

It may be the Socialist really knows nothing of the lower classes; or, if he does associate with those whom he calls the "proletariat," he does not seem to care much about their ideas and habits nor to have made himself acquainted with them; otherwise he would know, what is patent to all who do know anything about the poor, that nowhere is class more clung to, and differences maintained so determinedly whether in the country village or the London tenement. The gradations of these differences are, while puzzling to others, clear to themselves, nor do they abate anything from their own position, nor pass the line they choose to draw.

Any one who has entertained the labouring or lower classes understands this fully, and has never escaped some trouble in placing each person satisfactorily, and

in making such arrangements as might please all and give offence to none.

General Booth (whose experience of the lower classes is greater than that of most people) says he finds it impossible to mix the people who come to him for shelter; that there seem to be as many classes in his shelters as there are outside; and although he (notwithstanding his long experience) cannot see these differences, he has to arrange for them as nearly as may be.

We Non-Socialists may think it sufficient to classify as we do those whom the Socialist masses together in one or other of the two classes he calls Bourgeois and Proletariat; General Booth shows that *our* classification even is not sufficient for the lower orders. Yet the Socialist is to do away with classes. With whose consent, then? for whose pleasure? You would think you had left class behind you when you came to a twopenny shelter, yet it is not so. The Socialist is to override all this; and in the meantime, in order to annihilate some classes, he intensifies class feeling by arousing bitterness and hatred where none exists, and by stimulating any vexation or anger he finds into class-feeling, and fanning it into a flame of passion.

He is not only aware of what he is doing, but he confesses he is doing it intentionally. He says he is asked, "How . . . can we make the accentuation and exacerbation of class feeling the starting-point for a social reconstruction, in which classes shall be abolished? Is not the attitude of the benevolent old gentleman who says, 'Let us ignore classes, let us regard each other as human beings,' more consonant with what we have been saying? We answer, No."

We read in the *Clarion*: "The difficulty of convincing people of the rightness and truth of Socialism,

brought out so forcibly by H. W. Hobart in these columns, is the more hard to account for when one bears in mind those to whom our propaganda is more chiefly directed, and what they may reasonably expect as the result of the change from their present life to life under Socialism. When it is remembered what a hand-to-mouth existence the working class endure, it would seem that the dictates of ordinary reason would lead them to strive for a change for the better—there is work for the Socialist. Men and women must be made to distinctly understand what they are entitled to have, and of what they are at present deprived."

Thus we see that the aim of the Socialist is not to satisfy desires and needs, but to arouse class feeling, discontent, and envy. He seems not to be aware that the working-man is fully alive to the evils that exist, but that the best and most intelligent of them do not desire the Socialist's remedies.

It may be our pamphleteer is right when he says that they would like to dine with those from whom their circumstances separate them; but if it were at the price of having to associate with those whom they consider beneath them, whom they intend not to descend to, they would probably prefer to stay as they are, and choose their own company. This does not seem to occur to the Socialist, although he perceives, he says, that the working-man "hangs back."

Nor does the Socialist seem to know that those whom he stigmatises as mere "lumps of class feeling" associate quite as freely with those who have neither titles nor money as with those who have, and as those do whom the Socialist takes under his special protection. It would probably be found that those whose names he honours by his selection as samples of class feeling

count more untitled and more landless persons among their acquaintance, more persons dependent on continual work for their annual incomes, than possessors of lands and titles.

Socialism may exterminate "the upper classes," but it will have to wait a long time before class feeling is eradicated from the so-called "Proletariat." The Socialist will find that he has not done with classes when he makes the working class the dominant class. And unless all the other classes are killed off during the revolution or tamely acquiesce in the new arrangements, he will find he has a considerable number of classes on his hands after revolution, and of very rebellious classes too, which, with the best will in the world, he will scarcely be able to massacre. Among these the workman may prove not his least difficulty; of this he has fair warning now in the stand-off attitude which he complains of when he speaks of the "uphill work" which forces him to go on "sacrificing to the mob."[1] The Socialist State may refuse to recognise classes, but it will not undo their existence nor eradicate the feelings they cherish; rebels they may be, but they will be there to trouble the Socialist mind.

Before however the Socialist proceeds to deal with class, he will have taken all the possessions of those called "the classes," and have set them to work in the production of the necessaries of life; daily labour will be provided for them, and they will produce what they consume and then there will be only one recognised class, the working class; and this compulsion and the compulsion of equal condition will, in so far as it abridges freedom, lower the tone of men's minds and affect class.

[1] *Clarion.*

Probably one reason why the Socialist thinks it will be so simple a matter to effect the dominancy of the working class, and to force all classes into subjection to this one class, is the misleading nature of his present classification; for, as in the future he intends to see only one class, so in the present he decides to see only two classes. He divides Humanity broadly and indifferently into Bourgeois and Proletariat, "Haves" and "Have-nots," "consumer and producer," "employer and employed." The Bourgeois, *i.e.*, the "Haves," the Consumer, the Employer, the Oppressor, the Fleecer are all identical, or sufficiently akin to be classed as one. The Proletariat are the "Have-nots," the Producers, the Employed, the Oppressed, the Fleeced, and they also are all sufficiently identical to be called one. He mentions no others in his classification. He is evidently unaware of any class which is divided by a sharp dividing line, by a gulf, from all other classes, which line, which gulf, the working-man maintains as strenuously as any other, will not cross, and will not obliterate.

The Socialist's knowledge of himself and of Humanity leads him to consider the "Have-nots" as likely to want what the "Haves" possess; but he has fallen into the double error of overlooking the fact that not all those who have no possessions covet the possessions of others to the extent of wishing or being willing to plunder them; and of forgetting that the "Have-nots" divide themselves into three separate classes, one of which, and one only, is so desirous to "expropriate," that, flinging aside all the principles the other "Have-nots" cherish, risks all, even life itself, for the sake of appropriating the property of others. This is the criminal class, from whom the working-man stands disapprovingly and rigidly aloof, and between whom, as also between the pauper and vagrant

class, a very distinct separating line exists, a real "gulf," over which the working-man does not pass nor allow those on the other side of it to pass to him. Paupers, vagrants, and tramps all stand with the working-man and with the "Haves" on this side of the gulf, together with all classes of all descriptions, facing with determined resistance the burglarious designs of the expropriators called by Non-Socialism criminals, by Socialism "victims."

There is no gulf at all between the classes of the "Haves" and the "Have-nots;" on the contrary, they mix and associate at every point all along a connecting line.

The Socialist not only falls into the absurd error of amalgamating, or massing together, as one class classes which have nothing in common, which refuse to mingle or to be called one; but he tries to achieve the impossible task of removing the "gulf" from where it is, *i.e.*, between criminals and honest men, and of placing it where there is no gulf—between the "Haves" and "Have-nots." The criminal class does not merge into the working class any more than it does into any other class at any point; it is recruited from all classes by those who fall out of their own class, whether that be the working class or any other, and those who fall, fall not merely out of the ranks of the "Have-nots" but out of all ranks. When they fall, they fall entirely away, and generally for ever; there is, as a rule, no returning, nor do they drag their own class down with them; the class they fall from, whether it be the working class or any other, does not come nearer to the criminal class than before—the line remains as sharp and exclusive as when they fell. And although it be urged, as it is, that a larger proportion of criminals fall out of the working class than out of

any other, the fact remains intact that the working class is not dragged down, does not become criminal, and is not anywhere or at any time a part of the criminal class.

The criminal class is, and remains, more distinct from every other than are the propertied classes from any other class. The working classes and the propertied classes do merge and mingle everywhere; there is no line or division between them anywhere—no gulf, no impassable point, as Socialists postulate, between them. The "Haves" are workers also, workers in other spheres, at other occupations (productive, though not manual); they do the greatest portion of the most important work of the world—that work without which the labouring classes could not work at all.

In their work, whether physical or mental, the "Haves" and the "Have-nots" merge and mix. And as apart from work, even those "Haves" who do not work productively or otherwise, do mix and mingle with the working classes; they live together side by side; they talk together, walk together, are attached to each other, are interested in each other's work, joys, and sorrows. In sickness and in health, in life and in the chamber of death, they are together; there is no gulf, no sharp dividing line.

I do not here allude merely to domestic servants who live under the same roof as the "Haves;" and I do not forget that dwellers in towns live side by side without knowing each other's names; but that is common to all ranks and is quite irrespective of class.

Apart from towns, however, the "Haves" and the "Have-nots" are not separated in their daily lives; but the criminal class and the working class have nothing in common. Common honesty draws a sharp dividing line between them, and creates an impassable gulf.

The working-man will not associate with the thief; he shuns him, dislikes him, fears him.

The Socialist does not seem in his classification to have realised, or even to have perceived this; or else (which is more probable), he masses these two hitherto sharply divided classes together, making them one class, knowing that his army must be drawn principally, if not entirely, from those "Have-nots" who already prey upon the "Haves." To enlist the whole army of these, he has only to do what he roughly does—*i.e.*, call them and the working classes by one common name and offer them the spoil of the "Haves." The spoil is the principal thing; that is what has to be fought for; there is no misunderstanding the object of Socialism; it is stated too clearly —*i.e.*—to obtain the property of the "Haves." There is a class of "Have-nots" who always fight for this property, are fighting for it now—the criminal class; and this class forms the most powerful nucleus that can be had for future fighting. These, from their unscrupulousness in the attainment of their object, and from their entire oneness in aim and in principle with the Socialist, and from their knowledge of the means, and their experience in appropriating what belongs to others, will be invaluable in the work of expropriation; seeing that, as Mr. Belfort Bax says, "for him" (the Socialist) "it is indifferent whether social and political ends are realised by lawful or lawless means."[1]

The criminal classes are not, however, the majority of the "Have-nots," and not a number sufficient to overpass the great gulf on the one side of which they stand alone. The Socialist naturally would not like the working-man to think that he is identified with criminals, lest he should resent it; nor to perceive that the criminal

[1] "Ethics of Socialism."

classes are necessary for the achievement of Socialism; nor that they are also, in common with him, addressed as "victims" and the "oppressed;" yet it is necessary to get at the criminals, and to let them know that they will be wanted on the day of revolution and that there is booty to be had.

If the use of language be, as we are told, primarily to conceal thought, the term Proletariat under these circumstances serves its purpose admirably; it is sometimes identified with the working class, sometimes with the most indigent class, and is, so to speak, here, there, and everywhere. Very remarkable is the way in which Socialists use this word; they seem, to do them justice, very hazy about its meaning, and their use of it is always vague, often contradictory, and never consonant with its derivation and original meaning.

Bourgeois is another word of this sort, and is used in the same illogical, incorrect, and extraordinary way—a way, however, pregnant with meaning in other directions.

The introduction of French words into English literature is generally not necessary, although common with some classes of novelists; but if French words are used, it is a pity not to use and understand them definitely and accurately. Bourgeois and Proletariat are used variously by various Socialist authors, and we find even the same author using them in various senses. There is, however, unanimity upon one point with regard to them, and that is that these two terms comprise all classes, and that under one or the other every one falls, according to whether he is consumer or producer, workman or master—they are always indeed respectively used synonymously with these terms. There is also unanimity upon these points: that the Bourgeois are all those who do not work manually for

wages, that they all have property, that they are the "Haves," and that the Proletariat have no property and are the "Have-nots;" and it is here, in the midst of this singularly confused arrangement, between these two so-called but erroneously named classes, that the Socialist decides to place his gulf. "Between possession and confiscation is a great gulf fixed, the gulf between the Bourgeois and the Socialist worlds."[1]

We must pass over the assumption here that all working-men are Socialists; we have it on the Socialist's own authority that they are not, that they are "thankless and foolish," and that they "hoot him and call him a liar and a fool."[2] We also know that if they were, a greater number of Socialist members would be returned to Parliament, and that the revolution we are promised would be here. We must take it that, in the usual Socialist sense, Bourgeois includes all those who are not manual workers, criminals, or paupers, *i.e.*, shopkeepers, tradesmen, merchants, officials, the professional, artistic, literary, and scientific classes; the clergy, the army and navy, and all the leisured and titled classes, that its use also implies, and erroneously, that all these persons possess property, for the bourgeois are the "Haves;" and we must remember that every man "belongs to one or the other of "the two great modern classes," Bourgeois or Proletariat. Here, as always, it is made quite clear that, for the Socialist, there are only two classes.

According to this classification it is to be remarked,

[1] We are given to understand that the Proletariat is the Socialist world. No Socialist would call himself a Bourgeois or number himself and his friends among Bourgeois; his scorn and hatred of everything Bourgeois is too intense for him to allow himself to be thought anything so vulgar.

[2] Nunquam, "Merrie England."

that if there are only two classes, it is impossible there can be any middle class; consequently "middle class" is entirely meaningless; for being, as is stated, one of "the two great modern classes," it necessarily includes all the upper classes and all those before mentioned as included in the term bourgeois, and is thus not in the middle of anything. And in "the distinction between employer and employé," master and workman, bourgeois and proletaire—employer, master, and bourgeois are used as synonymous; therefore there is no middle, nor can there be, when there are only two.

We are also told that civilisation is "bourgeois civilisation." It might be asked, then, if "bourgeois" should include all classes of the community? But we know it does not include Socialists or those who think with them.

Now the English of *bourgeois* being *burgher*, in modern life citizen, and the Bourgeois (*i.e.*, the middle and upper classes) in Socialist speech and meaning, including shopkeepers, traders, and all who are not wage-earners, such as officials, the army and navy, the clergy, and all professional, learned, and leisured and titled persons, it is obvious that there is some reason for using the term so incorrectly, inasmuch as the words burgher, citizen, middle class have clearly defined meanings inherent in them; as Socialists attach other meanings to them and use them differently, it is necessary to find out, if possible, their reason for doing so.

Mr. Belfort Bax speaks of the "modern proletariat or working class;" whereas the proletariat, correctly speaking, is a class without property or votes, and a large proportion of the modern working class has both. Why does Mr. Belfort Bax write as if he were unaware of this?

Mr. Bernard Shaw does not always indicate the

working-man when he speaks of the proletariat (although he tells us that "every increase in the political power of the proletariat will most surely be used by them for their economic and social protection"),[1] for he says that the proletarian was the first man who appeared after all the land had been appropriated. (This is rather incomprehensible, inasmuch as all the land is not yet appropriated.) And he adds, that he may be "a vagrant, a trespasser, a tramp, or a thrall." Surely a new meaning ought to be devised and agreed upon for this word proletariat. As it comes from the French *prolétaire*, I will give Littré's definition of it: "Membres de la classe la plus indigente."

Now the working class is not the most indigent class.

As it is the stock term of German Socialists, I shall also give Meyer's definition: "Stand, Gesammtheit der besitzlosen Klasse." A class, the body of the propertyless class.

The working class in England is not propertyless; their savings amount to more than 90½ millions in the Post Office Savings Bank alone.

Germans generally use it to signify the poorest of the people, those who live from hand to mouth: "Aus der Hand in den Mund lebende Volksklasse."

The proletariat among the Romans, from whom the word is derived, was the sixth class, and had no property, and only one vote for the whole class; the term *proles* signifying that the only benefit the Roman State derived from this class was their offspring. Probably with new civilisation, new justice, new private property, there might be new dictionaries and new derivations; when also, perhaps, Socialists will have come to some agreement between themselves as to their definite in-

[1] "Fabian Essays."

tention with regard to these words; at present all use them variously and inconsistently with their derivation and meaning, for some purpose which is not assigned.

It is clear, however, that Socialists include in the Proletariat the working classes who have property and votes as well as those who have neither, and that they include in the Bourgeois all the other classes whomsoever except their Proletariat. But simple and effective though this classification be it is not correct.

It is clear that Socialists include in the term Proletariat (*prolétaire*) three distinct classes—classes so distinct that two of them would warmly resent being classed with the third, and one of these two would as warmly resent being classed with the other two, if any one so classed them in language that they could understand. The working class would be indignant if they were told they were members of the criminal class or if they were numbered among paupers, vagrants, beggars, loafers, tramps, or thralls; and these last-mentioned persons, who form a class more distinct from the working class than are wage-earners from shopkeepers, would also be indignant at the injustice of classing them with criminals. Socialists, therefore, select for use the term Proletariat, which has a fine mysterious sound.

Unless criminals are identical with working-men, and these again with paupers, they form three very distinct classes, for there can be no greater difference than that between a criminal and an honest working-man, and it is one which the working-man himself understands and will not obliterate.

Again, there can be no greater difference than that between those who work, earn wages, maintain themselves and families, and those who do not do either, but are maintained by others. Yet these three, which now

the Socialist resolutely calls one, are in the future, with a few other classes also very dissimilar, to form his one and only class.

To do him justice, however, it must be noted that he does not regard criminals, paupers, and vagrants in the light that we do; he looks upon crime not as a fault, but as a misfortune, for which circumstances are responsible; and as he considers most crimes to be the natural consequence of private property, the holding of which is the one supreme crime, those who live by theft are not held by him to be blamable. Criminals, vagrants, tramps, are all the "oppressed" and the "fleeced." These opinions, whittling away as they do the difference between honesty and dishonesty, incapability and capability, and obliterating the line between them, may perhaps make the classification less offensive to the working-man if he should not be in the future particular about honesty, energy, and independence of spirit.

Thus Socialists, not distinguishing between, or disregarding, the marked differences which exist, remove the landmarks, and draw an arbitrary line where there is no line at all between the propertied and the propertyless—where indeed no line can be drawn; for a large number of working-men have, besides money in various investments, houses of their own, whereas a large number (indeed the majority) of those called the propertied classes have neither. The greater part of the middle class, and probably a majority of the professional, learned, and leisured classes, have neither private property nor houses of their own, nor anything which they do not earn annually and consume.

It would probably astonish those who are carried away by Socialist classification to find that only a small minority of those whom the Socialist classes as

Bourgeois, the "Haves," the propertied, the oppressors, the fleecers, have any funded or landed property whatever. There is not only that great body of shopkeepers and tradesmen who never retire from business (which indicates their dependence upon daily work for income); there are also shop-assistants, clerks, and officials in public and private offices; there are schoolmasters and schoolmistresses, tutors and governesses, all that myriad who work among the poor, and all annuitants who have been workers, high and low; none of these are or can be included in the "proletariat," although their labour is, or has been, as toilsome as that of the so-called labouring class, and often with much longer hours, but they are not propertied persons. Then there are also the literary, scientific, artistic, and learned classes generally, most of whom are dependent on their daily work for their daily bread, yet are not labourers on the one hand nor propertied on the other; there are also soldiers, sailors, clericals, and others who, although considered worse than useless by Socialists, are workers, and for the greater part not propertied, the majority being also dependent upon their work for their bread, and who would have no bread if there were no demand for their work; to call all these persons idle, propertied, and useless, is to make an absolutely false and misleading statement.

That people demand what is useless is quite a different proposition, the truth or untruth of which depends entirely on the feelings and opinions of the persons demanding, and not at all upon the judgment of those who have not these needs and know nothing about them. Those who are not Socialists know that one set of men cannot determine what other men require, and they consider that people cannot be constrained to want what is useful, and ought not to be punished for want-

ing what is useless, nor be prevented from obtaining what they consider useful; but that those who satisfy such demands (which, by those who demand, are considered needs as vital to them and more important, than beef and beer) are useless is utterly false, as false as the statement that they are the "Haves," the propertied.

It is probable that wage-earners make more demands upon clericals than any other class (judging by chapels and churches and by Roman Catholic and other places of worship in crowded districts), yet clericals are those whom the Socialist thinks worse than useless, and the working class is the class he thinks superior to any other class.

It is strange the Socialist does not know that only a small, perhaps even an insignificant, minority of those whom he calls Bourgeois, the propertied, the "Haves," have property; that of these only a minority are not workers, and workers of the most useful description; this however it is impossible the Socialist can recognise, inasmuch as he does not consider any work useful or necessary which is not directly productive of material things. He does not consider anything but manual labour work; and he says the work of the doctor and the author is not work, only pleasure, which he would never wish finished.[1]

The Socialist's experience of the work of doctors is different from that of most people; and if we might judge of authors from the lives of most of them—and especially from a lately deceased eminent novelist, who has left it on record that his work was such a toil to him that nothing less than the necessity to provide for the requirements of life would have induced him to write (tied

[1] Nunquam, "Merrie England."

as it were to a stake from which he could not escape) —we should say their work was decidedly toilsome.

The fact is, that love or dislike of work is one thing, and the question what work is, is quite another. There is, moreover, no more reason to suppose that the doctor loves the dissecting-room, the fever-ward, and the death-bed, more than the watchmaker loves making watches, the ploughman loves following the plough, or the crossing-sweeper loves sweeping his crossing.

But as the Socialist thinks that the doctor's and author's work is not work because they love it, he certainly cannot think the artist's, the musician's, or the scientist's work is work; nor could we expect him to recognise as work the great scientific achievements of those distinguished men who are not only eminent in their own special sphere of work, and who are not professional scientists but engaged in other important work of the world, whom our universities and learned institutions listen to and delight to honour. The fact is ignored by Socialism (which consequently does not inform the working classes of it) that our great seats of learning hang upon the words of their Chancellors and Rectors (who are generally statesmen like our present Prime Minister, or are engaged in political business) with delight and reverence, which points to the fact that an immense amount of work must be done by them, apart from their public and ordinary duties, before they are able to command the attention of such audiences as those of Oxford, Aberdeen, or the Royal Institution. Nor, consequently, could we expect them to consider that, although eminence such as this and world-wide notoriety is only attained by the few who are as stars in the firmament, others of the same class as these (though fol-

lowing less conspicuously) tread in the steps of such radiant examples as Lord Kelvin and Lord Rayleigh; yet these and all such as they engaged in similar great and useful scientific work are called by Socialists "idle Bourgeois," "drones." Neither, of course, do Socialists call it work to sit half the night in the House, and half the day in an office at a desk; nor do they consider the soldier and the sailor work because they are not always fighting; these are they who get no pay for overtime when they march all night and fight by day, and whose officers do likewise for pay quite incommensurate with their necessary expenses.

Like the Socialist's classification, this denial that work is not work unless it is the work of the labourer, is very simple, and very misleading to ignorant people although so erroneous and untrue; it serves the purpose of the classification and of the assertion that the proletariat are all workers and all propertyless, and that the Bourgeois are all those who are not wage-earners, and are all idle and propertied. The working-man sees his own work, but he does not see the work of the other classes. If even he comes in contact with it, it is not of that material nature which the labourer, who has no experience of it, can recognise as toil; he does not know, the uneducated cannot imagine, how much labour is involved before a statesman can lecture on chemistry before chemists and Oxford audiences, or before argon can be discovered and explained.[1] Their Socialist friends teach them to identify property with idleness, and it would certainly astonish them to learn how few comparatively of those who have even large property do not work, and that laboriously.

[1] The labourer probably has never heard the names of Lord Salisbury, Lord Kelvin, and Lord Rayleigh in connection with science.

The Socialist who writes learned books on Socialism and civilisation sees a score or two of Dukes who certainly are not labourers, and who certainly have property, and he concludes they are all idle, because, having all the necessaries of life and more, he does not see what they can work at; he evidently runs on the same lines as Nunquam, who does not see what a man could want more than beef, beer, and tobacco, &c., in comfortable sufficiency. He sees a few hundred young men amusing themselves who are probably propertied and possibly idle, and he considers it proved to demonstration that all who are not wage-earners and who are amusing themselves are propertied and idle. He sees a dozen or so of elderly millionaires, every one of whom probably began life as manual labourers and wage-earners, and who have made their money principally in the Colonies or America, and he has here proof positive that all the acquaintances of these are millionaires also. He sees a few scores of rich retired capitalists, who may probably be put in the same category as these millionaires with regard to their early life, who are giving employment and opportunities to hundreds or thousands born in the same position they were formerly in when they were thankful for the opportunity which the same sort of employment gave to them, and he makes the delightful discovery that all the millions of people who are not manual labourers, not producing beef, beer, coats, and the necessaries of life, are all propertied and all idle, and therefore that they all form one class, even as he made his other discovery, which is also not true, though it may be new, that all those whom he calls proletariat are all workers, all propertyless, and all "the most indigent."

Nothing can be more flagrantly at variance with fact

than these statements; one is as false as the other. For his one class does not consist only of workers; nor are the workers all propertyless, nor are men who have votes, and more than £90,500,000 of money in the Post-Office Savings Bank alone, represented by the word "Proles." And it does consist of three separate and distinct classes, who are as different in education, occupation, and circumstances as well as in character, as it is possible for one set of men to be from another. For one of these classes works, is honest, is crimeless, has property, has votes, and maintains itself; in all these particulars it resembles more nearly those whom the Socialist calls "Haves" than it does the other classes with whom it is massed. The second does not work, has no vote, no property, and is maintained by charity and by law. The third does not work, is dishonest and criminal, has no property, no votes, is maintained by the nation.[1]

There is a great gulf dividing this third class from all other classes. This gulf is never crossed, nor do the workers ever associate with those on the other side. It is probably as rare for a wage-earner to marry a criminal as it is for a man of any other class to do so.

There is no gulf, no sharp dividing line, between any of the other classes, but only here between this one class and all the other classes. In all society there is no line, no gulf, anywhere but here; the criminal class does not overlap nor merge into the working class nor any other. Yet where classes do overlap and merge and mingle the Socialist asserts there is a gulf; and where they do not overlap nor mingle, where there is an

[1] Should the Socialist consider that it is begging the question to call those criminals whom he does not allow are dishonest or criminal, the words "habitual transgressors" of the law may be substituted.

impassable gulf (one the working-man refuses to cross) he says there is none, and that the classes on either side of it are not separate but one and indivisible!

It is curious, too, that the Socialist should import the French word Bourgeois; he evidently thinks this is a term of opprobrium, and he applies it to all who are not, and are not likely to become, Socialists—never to himself nor his friends. Indeed, Bourgeois and Proletariat may, socialistically speaking, be considered respectively as synonymous with Non-Socialist and Socialist, between whom the Socialist says there is a great gulf fixed, "the gulf between the Bourgeois and the Socialist worlds."

Here we have our gulf definitely fixed; on one side of this gulf stand paupers, vagrants, criminals, and Socialists (we have this on Socialist authority) glaring with rapacious eyes across to the other brink, where the "Haves," "the propertied classes," the great body of workers, the majority of wage-earners and manual labourers, stand together side by side to resist, as one man, burglarious company and burglarious attacks.

These words Proletariat and Bourgeois are no doubt from a Socialist point of view judiciously chosen; it would never do to tell the working-man he was standing "shouther to shouther" with the burglar and garotter, helping them to do their work; the untruth would be so unpleasant to all concerned, orators as well as auditors.

It is difficult, however, to find wherein the stigma of the term Bourgeois lies. The Bourgeois are generally shopkeepers, but why should it be so very *infra dig.* to be a shopkeeper? Are no Socialists shopkeepers? or are there no middle-class Socialists at all? We know all Socialists are not Proles, not wage-earners, manual labourers; far from it. Many of them besides votes have

property, and large property; they are by no means "indigent," much less "the most indigent class;" so they cannot be Prolétaires. If there are, as they say, only two classes, and they are not Prolétaires, they must be Bourgeois; yet they say they are not—that there is a great gulf between them and the Bourgeois. They are evidently very particular not to be massed in one class with those to whom they object or they would not create a gulf wherewith to keep themselves apart. We should be surprised at seeing even "lumps of class feeling" creating "a gulf" to separate them from people they did not like, because "the classes" in England do not do this sort of thing nor feel like this; but our astonishment is inexpressible when we find these denouncers of class resisting strenuously, even to the extent of creating a gulf, a fate which they intend ruthlessly to inflict upon others, upon whole classes, directly they get them in their power. While they keep themselves rigorously aloof from contact with the Bourgeois, they intend to amalgamate him and all the classes the term includes with the one class whom one of themselves calls "wolves."

We can understand that they themselves prefer to be Prolétaire, for they say they consider the Proletariat superior to every other class; and it is natural, having such very strong class feeling, that they should, according to the genuine class feeling of the good old sturdy sort, like to be of the superior class, and that they do not wish to be classed with people they object to and consider inferior, only it might be considered seemly that they should become labourers, as they mean to compel other people to be; but we do not see that these gentlemen do any more of "the necessary work" of the world than the learned and leisured classes of "Bourgeois civilisation" which Socialism is to eradicate. We

are not aware that they are all engaged in the production of beef, bread, and beer; although they say "consumers who do not produce are not compatible with the public weal." Books, lectures, and much talk many of them do of course produce, but perhaps the largest portion of the world is of opinion that this work of theirs, far from being "necessary work," is useless and unnecessary, and that ploughing or weaving would be more helpful than "prodding."

This makes it all the more singular, and indeed incomprehensible, why the Bourgeois should be so much despised by them. It is true the Bourgeois were looked down upon by the aristocrats of France, and still more virulently hated by the Proletariat of that country during a period when all evil passions were let loose, and the term never seems to have lost the opprobrium cast upon it in 1789. It has the same sort of flavour when used by certain persons as "Cockney" has in England, although while Bourgeois in France is applicable to all townsmen or tradespeople, the term Cockney, strictly speaking, is only properly applicable to those born within the sound of Bow Bells. The flavour of contempt attaching to this term, however, would make it very suitable for Socialist use, were it not that, being English, it is too well understood to be put to any purpose other than its own. Bourgeois has a wider sound, and indeed is wider in signification; but it seems hard for the French that their word for the respectable burgher should carry such stigma with it, that their burghers or bourgeois should be considered such a contemptible lot that their very name should carry opprobrium when qualifying even civilisation.

It is difficult to find any reason for the stigma the Socialist affixes to this unfortunate word. We

can understand the old French aristocrat attaching a depreciatory meaning to the term denoting a class so very different from his in manners and pursuits which was not attached to it in Italy; but we cannot understand upon what height it is these Socialist gentlemen stand when they look down upon respectable burghers with far more withering scorn than did the nobles of the *ancien régime*. The burgher of old was a very respectable, often very able and talented man, who lived in a burg; he was probably sometimes a villain (there are villains in all classes), but although we have no Benvenuto Cellinis now, and scarcely any other sort of burgher except Boers, our civilisation, we are told, is "Bourgeois civilisation." Are we to suppose it was founded by Bourgeois? By which Bourgeois then? The hated Parisian Bourgeois, the Florentine burgher, or the corresponding members of the same class whom the Ancient Roman found in Gaul and Britain when he illumined these lands? or does it mean that this Græco-Roman civilisation of which we still retain the laws together with many of its customs, was adapted to, or adopted by, shopkeepers and burghers only? We had imagined it was founded by those who are still unsurpassed in the production of all that appertains to the highest kind of beauty and intellectual work, and that it sprang from those who were in the van of the intelligence of the world, and was adopted by all afterwards who were ever in the van, by all the classes in all the ages following, according to the measure of the capability of each to adopt it, and that inferior minds and races alone have had nothing or little to do with it.

If it has survived in some measure through a burgher class, why should it be thought less of on that account? And when we look at what the burghers of Florence, the

other Italian and French and Continental cities have handed down to us, we wonder what these Socialists have produced who look down upon the Bourgeois. The superiority of the Socialist may entitle him to look down, but we are unaware that he has produced higher or more useful work than the Non-Socialist "Bourgeois."

Therefore "Bourgeois civilisation" must, to any ordinary person who has any modest opinion of himself, or any capability of appreciation of the great work of the Bourgeois world (the world which is not Proletariat), seem a singularly incorrect appellation. So incorrect that it sends a man wonderingly astray from his subject to that enlightened medical student whose definition of a lobster was "a red fish which walks backwards," a graphic, though not spiteful nor small, but only ignorant description of a creature which is neither red nor a fish, and which does not walk backwards. The ineptness of this definition is analogous to the use of the word Bourgeois when it is employed to indicate a man who does not live in a burgh, who has large property, principally in land, but who does much of the important work of the world—in fact, all that which is not merely manual.

Of course this, like many things which seem trivial, but upon which great conclusions may hang, does not after all much matter when once we know what is meant, viz., what is included in the term "Bourgeois," which term in itself is quite innocuous; but the peculiar use the Socialist makes of it is misleading, and it is a pity he has left others to point out the meaning of his language, of words which he uses in so unusual and indeed unheard-of way; and he would certainly have passed for a straightforwarder man, had he not

told the uneducated that there are only two classes, and that all who are not wage-earners and criminals are idle, useless, dishonest and propertied, and that they are all Bourgeois.

That he should call himself the friend of the poor, and give them such extraordinary information, is a fact as curious as any since Cagliostro, except perhaps the almost stranger and concurrent one, that there are vast numbers of people who are not illiterate who believe him. The fact in itself would be contemptible were it not sad that so many are deceived upon a point where truth is to them of such vital importance, and in a way calculated to arouse and inflame envy, greed, indignation, and hatred to the degree at which delirium and incapability of using reasoning powers sets in. But it is necessary to bring the working-man to this point if he is to drive the Guards down Parliament Street and make a "bloody puddle" in Trafalgar Square, as we are promised he shall do; and to bring him to this point, the facts as regards the classes generally, and as regards his own and the criminal class in particular, must be kept carefully out of sight.

But, O working-man, be not deluded. Do not, in your weakness and in the darkness of your night, be induced or "prodded" into wandering down the side of that gulf which divides you from the criminal classes, and which is being made easy for you by so-called friends, who do nothing for you but talk and promise; who promise to give not out of their own pockets, but out of the pockets of others, into which you are to thrust your hand, and by your strength drag out whatsoever therein is to be got—and got not for yourselves, but for your Socialist friends, who will only give you whatever they see fit (only not the

land or any of "the instruments of production and exchange"[1]) after you have gone down and across the separating gulf, whereby you will have lost all you pride yourselves upon at present, and whereby you will have been made one with those criminal hordes from whom you now stand proudly aloof, but with whom you are classed by those who see no difference between you.

You are to return to your wife and children on the night of the revolution, your hands stained with blood, your pockets full of anything you may have been able to steal, if you have been successful; if you are to return to them at all, if you are to try to drive the troops down Parliament Street—the troops, bethink you, who, led by Lords Lucan and Cardigan, charged the Russian guns (think of that and of what it means to charge a battery, "to ride into the jaws of death, into the mouth of hell")—think, first, whether these are the men to run before you, whether these "Lords" who lead them are recreant, useless, feeble, contemptible "Bourgeois."

And on the morrow of your success, when you have driven this same cavalry and these recreant Lords down Parliament Street, you will be told that your class, the class of paupers, criminals, and workmen, is triumphant, and that there is no other class whatsoever.

Is that what you want? Will that indemnify you? Will you feel yourselves well paid?

You may get something else, but that is a matter of

[1] ". . . All remedies which reject the nationalisation of the instruments of production must be sham ones."—*Bernard Shaw*, "*Fabian Essays.*"

"The logical terminus *ad quem* . . . is obviously . . . the completion of the process of Socialisation, *i.e.*, the complete Socialisation not only of production, but of exchange as well."—*Belfort Bax*, "*Ethics of Socialism.*"

calculation and of many contingencies; it will remain to be seen what you get. In the meantime, think whether you want to be confounded with the convict and paupers. Honesty is as precious to you as it is to any "Haves"; but you are classed with criminals and vagrants that you may with them pull the chestnuts out of the fire. What will become of the chestnuts remains to be seen; we know what became of them in the fable. Keep not the plunder in your mind's eye; plunder is always to be had by risking your neck for it. It is dangerous even to look at it; the birds in the bush are often more tempting than the bird in the hand. Look rather upon the company you are classed with; the word "Proletariat" hides it from you. Think of what you, together with those others who are also Proletariat, will be called upon to do before the change can come, before you can eat the chestnuts or grasp the birds; think of the fact that if now you are deceived you may also be deceived in the hereafter about other things which you were led to think so certain.

For you are deceived when you are told that you are "Prolétaire." You are not the most indigent, you are not without votes; you are deceived when you are told that tramps, criminals, and you are all one class. It is not true, it has never been true in the past and it is not true now; but it will be true in the future if you are not careful. It is intended that it should be true; it is not intended to deceive you in this; it is intended that you should be one class with tramps and criminals in the Socialist future.

What we all seek after first is truth; it is light we need, not darkness. When language is twisted, distorted, and dragged from its original meaning to other uses, it shrouds the light and makes thick darkness; and

when false and incorrect statements are made the reason generally is that the cause cannot stand and will not find favour if the truth is told. Truth is much simpler and easier than falsehood, and will always be used when there is nothing to hide and no motive for deception. Think of what this deception and falsehood now concerning class means—why *you* are always addressed, why you are always told you are to have the best of everything, and that your class is to be dominant; why, if not because you muster perhaps the largest number of strong hands, that you alone have *hands* strong enough to grasp the prey and carry it off for those who cannot obtain it without you—they themselves tell you they cannot. That is clearly why you, the physically strongest class as is supposed, are addressed as the *only* class, and why criminals and paupers are associated with you.

CHAPTER VI

EQUALITY

THE interested student of Socialism finds himself, in the course of his reading, curiously struck by one circumstance. He rises from his books each day reflecting, if he is benevolently minded, on the beauty of equality, on all the benefits it can bestow, on the large amount of misery it can alleviate, on the boon that it will be to the world in removing the sharp and painful contrast between nobility and degradation, virtue and vice, happiness and suffering. He reflects on the possibility of Socialism being really able to effect what it promises, whether the equality of wealth, opportunities, circumstance, will bring about the cessation of suffering, depravity, and brutality. He reads and re-reads (as befits a student) the authorities who preach this gospel of peace, to find by what beautiful adaptation of means to the end, by what carefully thought-out arrangements these blessings are to be acquired, in the hope of being told how a well-ordered State may so govern its members that all shall be satisfied with the work, food, clothes, and all the other necessaries and luxuries dealt out to each with paternal forethought, wisdom, and benignity. He returns again and again reflectively to passages which tell him that 1 lb. of bread, 1 lb. of meat, 1 lb. of vegetables, a little tobacco, some beer, a bed, a shelter, a little clothing, are all that is necessary to

satisfy the wants of any man, and that "a monarch or millionaire could hardly use more."[1]

He remembers that monarchs and millionaires, and a good many other people, do use and do want a good deal more, if not in quantity, yet in variety; that they spend their whole lives (being perfectly free to devote themselves to the acquirement of other things) in striving to obtain that which will supply them with all the material and other things over and above those indicated by Nunquam with which they wish to surround themselves. But still he appreciates the paternal solicitude which desires to provide the community with health and happiness by giving them equal quantities of all that is good for them, while at the same time bestowing the greatest benefaction of all—Equality.

But here he is suddenly struck by one strange circumstance: that never in all his reading of recent Socialist works has he found any mention of equality of nature as the end to be striven for, although all the means by which alone it might be hoped possible to attain it are so carefully devised. Indeed, on the contrary, the most recent works proclaim ostentatiously that "men are so different."

But surely, reflects the puzzled student, equality of character must be the object, unless it is meant that we are all alike, all equal now. For what an incalculable amount of misery there would be where there was no possibility of satisfying any desires except those which the State decreed were good; where would be the promised happiness and contentment if men are not now, or are not to be then, alike and equal in character, in disposition, in desires?

Since equality of condition (if it is productive of

[1] Nunquam, "Merrie England."

or accompanied by happiness) means equality of need, since equality of means of satisfaction of needs brings happiness (and is to be enforced solely for the sake of happiness for all), it is obvious that the physical, intellectual, and moral qualities of all men must be alike, or that, if they are not alike now, they will, by equality of training, speedily become alike; otherwise it is evident that a vast number (if not the majority) of men would be excessively unhappy—in fact, would find life so unendurable that they would rebel. Socialists are of course aware of this, and are prepared to deal with rebels; for if you are too much of a gentleman to work for your own living in the twentieth century (that is, under "Practical Socialism"), you will be compelled to support yourself by work in a penal colony; in plain English, suffer transportation with hard labour. It is thus clear that Socialists see that some men will not submit to their equality system and, as practical men, they have arranged how to meet the difficulty of inequality of character, and the means whereby they will punish and suppress it.

But if compulsion and penal colonies are not always to be had recourse to even to the end of time, it is evident it will be necessary to bring about equality of character and disposition, and that compulsion and penal colonies will be necessary until there is equality of character; in fact, until "Ideal Socialism" is in full working order, when every one will be alike happy in blacking his own shoes, scrubbing his own floor, emptying his own ashpit, or cleaning a sewer; when, indeed, "the only difference between a Prime Minister and a collier will be one of rank and occupation." Here it is clear that Ideal Socialism is arrived at, the desired aim—equality of character and disposition—attained.

Under Non-Socialism the principal, the essential, difference between a Prime Minister and a collier is his intellect, his capacity, his whole being in so far as it is not merely physical; his rank (*qua* Prime Minister) and occupation are merely accidental, and entirely dependent upon the difference in this man from other men; they are not inherent, but his characteristics are. The accident of the rank of the Prime Minister and his occupation depend upon what is inherent, and it is what is inherent makes men different. Socialists curiously overlook the fact that the difference between a clever and good-tempered and a stupid and bad-tempered man lies not in his clothes or occupation, which are determined by the man himself and by what he is, but in his nature, which he only, assisted by such circumstances as he may be able to control, can modify.

Under Socialism, Ideal Socialism (in relation to which Practical Socialism is only a kind of "preliminary step," and which Nunquam tells us is "really the same"[1]), the only difference in men ever so widely removed from each other naturally will be "one of rank and occupation" only, no personal or natural difference at all; thus perfect equality of character, it is obvious, will have been reached.

Some Socialists, however, seem very clearly of opinion that men are naturally equal, that there is no difference in them now. Nunquam himself says: ". . . all the money the earth contains can never buy a man more than the necessaries of life, for a man has but one body to clothe, but one stomach to feed, but one head to rest upon a pillow;"[2] and that "the inventor has

[1] "Really they are only part of one whole."
[2] "Merrie England."

already as much of all substantial things as he requires; . . . he could not spend more money if he got it."[1] Here it is quite clear that Socialism takes it for granted that all men are alike, that there is a strict natural equality, and that there is an "unaccountable inability" in Non-Socialists to see this. Unaccountable or not, there is a very decided inability to see that "all the money the earth contains can never buy a man more than the necessaries of life;" we cannot see man has no requirements beyond clothes, food, and rest, although some men need no more; but we can quite believe that there will not be much beyond this under Socialism, for we are told that "there would be nothing for the official to steal but food and clothing." This information is given in various forms, as here: "If every man had enough, it would be a pitiful spectacle to see the salt of the earth whining for more."[2] Thus the Socialist mind, far from seeing any natural inequality in man, thinks it "pitiful" if any man requires anything beyond or different from "enough" of all substantial things; and not only "pitiful," but he absolutely does not see how, having these, he could "spend more money if he got it;" consequently sees nothing repulsive in a condition of things in which "there would be nothing to steal but food and clothing."

This again proves how very unequal men naturally are, for while this idea is repulsive to us, it is not so to the Socialist; therefore, however little chance the Socialist may think we should have in an argument concerning the success of Socialism to effect equality of nature in man, it is clear there can be no question about the present actual inequality of nature.

[1] "Merrie England." [2] Ibid.

Herein, it will be noticed, are two vital differences between Socialism and Non-Socialism; the first, that Non-Socialists neither strive to effect this equality, nor think it a desirable object to aim at, but quite the reverse; the second, they do not believe it will be possible to attain it without degrading humanity, crushing out all that is highest in man—levelling down, in fact, from the Prime Minister, or from men of high mental rank, to the collier, or to men of low mental rank; for if the collier is a man of the first mental rank, he will do as some, or at least as one notable collier has done, cease to be a collier by raising himself to the rank of men who, like Prime Ministers, do the great and difficult work of the world.

Non-Socialists are surprised to hear that the only difference between—*e.g.*—Mr. Gladstone and any other man is one only of rank and occupation. We must believe Socialists, however, when they tell us that in their opinion the only difference is rank and occupation, for they have a serious purpose in view for the attainment of which they have laid well-thought-out plans—plans which they have been perfecting since Rousseau and Fourier—to carry out which they are prepared to fight to the death, and for which they have an organisation as nearly perfect, perhaps, as the dynamic nature of the matter allows.

It is folly to say this talk of equality is mere "visionary nonsense." The "visionary nonsense" of Rousseau led to the French Revolution, which the Socialists of to-day assert was a failure, because "the Proletariat were not prepared with plans for the Revolution." Socialists, however, are not making any mistake of this sort; they are not only well organised, and prosecuting their schemes with great diligence, but their

plans for the future have been very carefully and elaborately made, as well for government generally as for the attainment of natural equality.

Now in this matter of equality the Non-Socialist has nothing whatever in common with the Socialist; he diverges radically; no common footing is to be found anywhere. The Non-Socialist will indeed admit that it would be a most blessed thing if all men could be happy, if all their laudable desires could be gratified, if every man could have enough food, clothing, and all healthful luxuries, and whatsoever else his healthy needs might demand; but not only does he not agree with the Socialist's means, as being unlikely to attain the end in view, but he denies that equality of condition could make people happy, unless men were alike and equal in nature; and maintains that, being as they are, unequal even to extremes, they could never be happy under equality of condition. Envy, that meanest of all passions, might indeed derive content from seeing others deprived of everything which it could not itself obtain, and comfort would be bestowed upon incapability at the expense of capability, but no one could maintain that any nobler or more useful object would be achieved while men were unequal in desires and character generally.

It is supposed that equality of training and education will bring about the equality of character which will render equality of condition acceptable or endurable; but those who have experience of children know that what to one is delightful is torment to another; the children who come out of the same nursery, the same schoolroom, are frequently not more like each other than they are to others of other families and other training, but often essentially dissimilar. The books which

alone make the whole happiness, the whole life of one boy, are hateful to the very sight of other boys; the mental acquirements which have to be caned into one are as the very breath of life to another. The football, cricket, running, leaping, for which some boys live, and for which all else, all prospects and all inducements of every sort are sacrificed, are as odious to some of their playmates as nauseating potions. And later on in life, some delight in simplicity of living, in fresh air and in exercise; others, their friends and equals in condition, like heated rooms and sedentary pursuits. Some men never look into a book, scarcely glance at a newspaper, while others are never happy without books, pens, and paper. Some of us think the crimson and gold, the lofty rooms, and huge plate-glass windows of wealth uncomfortable and ugly, and the old-fashioned, quaint-shaped, low-ceilinged rooms with diamond-paned windows of the low-roofed house not to be foregone, no matter what mass of splendour rises beside it; while others, similarly educated and placed, think these low ceilings and lattice windows inconvenient, unhealthy, and mean.

Herein we see how glaringly circumstances, education, and surroundings have failed to draw us one whit nearer to each other in taste and ideas; how, on the contrary, education, giving us knowledge of many things, has enabled different men to develop different views which with less opportunity for knowledge must have remained more or less uniform. Unless education is stopped or retarded, no "work in penal colonies" will crush or drag men into the same mould or produce any similarity whatever, will not even make them passively content in the same conditions as those which make the whole happiness of some of their fellow-men.

Yet we find the apostle of modern Socialism, Karl Marx, from whom the doctrines of Social Democracy are principally drawn, at whose feet Socialists sit and learn, whose writings embody the ideas we find diluted in all English Socialist literature, stating that the inhabitant of a small house would find it unendurable if a larger one were built near him, because people would think he was a man of no pretensions; and he evidently thinks it quite right and estimable for the man of the small house to resent the larger house, and to resent it to such an extent that it would be expedient and well to prohibit the building of the larger house, or provide him (if it were built) with one equally large. "A house may be large or small, but as long as the surrounding houses are equally small, it satisfies all social expectations as a dwelling-place. But let a palace arise by the side of this small house, and it shrinks from a house into a hut. The smallness of this house now gives it to be understood that its occupant has either very small pretensions or none at all; and however high it may shoot up with the progress of civilisation, if the neighbouring palace shoots up also in the same or in greater proportions, the occupant of the comparatively small house will always find himself more uncomfortable, more discontented; more confined within his four walls."[1]

Thus we see that while the palace "shooting up" in the vicinity will not make the Non-Socialist "more uncomfortable, more discontented" in his own house "which may be large or small," it will make the Socialist uncomfortable and discontented, which is another proof of the inequality of men's nature, and of the impossibility of satisfying them by providing what

[1] Karl Marx, "Wages, Labour, and Capital."

one particular set of men think best, instead of allowing them to struggle for what their own tastes dictate.

Again, while the Socialist thinks that the discomfort and discontent which the palace overshadowing the house arouses are natural, even estimable and laudable, the Non-Socialist thinks such feelings contemptible, and the attributes of low natures only. The Socialist cannot endure, says Marx, that any man should have a larger house than his own, or that any one should think he has no pretensions; and the Non-Socialist despises this disposition, and would strive to eradicate any such tendency in himself or his children. What does it matter, the Non-Socialist asks, to a rightly constituted man what his pretensions are understood to be? or what does it matter if people think he has none at all? If he has nothing to pretend to it is quite right he should make no pretensions, nor would men as we know them in England, care at all were it thought they had no pretensions; this is the condition of mind approved and fostered here and by us; it is the reverse of the contemptible state Marx glorifies.

This remarkable difference again denotes the unalterable inequality and dissimilarity of men. We think envy so base that it should be left to feed upon itself, if so be that it may thus die by its own ravening. Socialists think it should be fostered, legislated for, and nourished at other people's expense.

The ideas and tastes of the German Socialist, Marx, and of his followers are thus the reverse of ours. We Non-Socialists like to see something different from ourselves, beyond us, above us, other than what we have, something to struggle for; we like each of us to have our own Excelsior banner (our Shakespeare expressed us in his Touchstone: "An ill-favoured thing, sir, but

mine own"), even if our neighbour does not think it a very fine one, and we like to see his floating over his own rock-built castle although we live in the little thatched cottage below. We do not consider this "snobbish;" on the contrary, we think the spirit of envy which would tear him and his house down because our own is small, or heighten ours because his is large, is that of the pure "snob." If we have not world-wide fame, or the goods which our castle-possessing magnate has, we like to think that there is fame and beauty and luxury in the world, although we may have failed to attain them, and we think it well for men and for the world that all should be allowed to strive after such a measure of attainment as may commend itself to the tastes and ability of each. Men of the right sort do not want to think or feel that no one has anything they have not, that no one is better than themselves, that no life is more luxuriously ordered than their own. It is true all characters are not what they should be, but we consider it better not to efface such differences or foster the lower sort by imposing arbitrary conditions on all.

And herein Socialists must agree that we are right, for otherwise we should long ago have imposed such conditions as would have destroyed and blotted out from the world the Socialist's ideal character. The Socialist's experience of the working-man seems to teach him that a good deal of trouble is necessary to get men to see things from Karl Marx's point of view, for he says, "If we keep on prodding the victims' sores, we must eventually direct the victims' interest to their own business."—*Clarion.*

It does not seem to occur to him that "the victim" is fully alive to his own interests, that he does not want

others to "prod" him, and that he prefers attending to his own business himself.

The object of the Socialist, therefore (unless equality is proposed with a malicious aim), is to efface individual character; his intention is to legislate against strongly pronounced individual characteristics and to stamp them out in order to enable Socialism to obtain and keep the acquisitions of those who would resist. Most people think life would be a continual punishment were pains taken to make everything equal for us from our cradle upwards. To make everything equal for everybody is the acme of the Socialist's desire, hence the "prodding" of the "thick blubbery hides."

Non-Socialists not only object to the prodding but they maintain that equality will obliterate all that is best and highest in human nature, and this in proportion as the equalising conditions are maintained and persevered in; that if indeed any Government or class—labouring class, criminal class, or any other class—were sufficiently powerful to establish and prosecute this system of equal circumstances with penal servitude for those who did not submit its contrivers and executers would simply be engaged in the "manufacture of idiots." It is not to be doubted that on the very day on which equality of condition were established the knell not only of civilisation but of England's greatness and of all greatness would be sounded, and that the foot of the invader would soon trample out Socialism, the hand of the conqueror partition the empire and establish a sane despotism in the place of a bureaucracy of equalitarians before the manufacture of idiots were well begun.

If Socialists started with the assertion that men are all equal by nature and alike, that therefore there was

no intention and no need to try to make them so, the proposition of the otherwise so insane a tyranny as compulsory equality of condition would not be so remarkable; but the supporters of the scheme start with the avowal that "men are so different."

A Fabian essayist tells us, "Human beings are fortunately very varied in their capacities and tastes; that which attracts one repels another."[1] This being so, the unavoidable question presses: Why then is equality of condition so desired as to be enforced if equality of character is not aimed at? for no one could suppose that unequal tastes and character could ever be content with equal fare. Why then force on resisting people equality of condition and prevent them striving for that which suits them if not to produce by this process that similarity which alone would render compulsion unnecessary?

One singularly inadequate reason is given—*i.e.*—to prevent men from injuring each other; but if enforcement of equality of condition, which can only be continuous torture to unequal beings, is the only means of preventing people injuring each other, it is very doubtful if humanity would accept the boon at the price; and if an insignificant portion did desire it, they would probably be quite ignorant of what it meant until they tried it. Working-men are told they would sit down to table with those they now consider above them, but they are not told that they would also have to sit down with criminals, paupers, and vagrants. This unpleasant side of equality is not put before them.

Every man likes to have more of what he considers he has not sufficient of, and the prospect of having

[1] Besant, "Fabian Essays."

this is what is held out to those who would accept equality of condition; but they are not told that no man will then be allowed to do what he likes with his own life, and what he considers his own; that he will not be allowed to have anything he likes if it differs from what other people have, or what it is ordered that all people shall have. This is not made clear or explained to them at all by the advocates of equality of condition. On the contrary, it is often denied, although the denial is a paradox, and involves the abnegation of the principle of equality of condition; which principle, however, is by no means abnegated or renounced, for it is the very foundation-stone of Socialism, without which the whole structure would fall to pieces.

The fact is, it is only the pleasant part of the programme that is produced for present use. All would like to see the homeless, the naked, the starving, housed, clothed, and fed; whether those who house, clothe, and feed themselves (in even the humble manner of the working-man) would like to have the right taken from them of doing this in their own way, and striving to attain whatever they please, and of using what they obtain as they see fit, is quite another matter, and a very doubtful one; and whether enforced equal education, much less enforced work, would bring satisfaction to men generally is also very questionable.

There can be no equality of condition if men are to do as they like with their own possessions and their own lives, and they cannot do as they like with their own if equality of condition is enforced; and equality of condition is the Socialist's *sine quâ non.*

The proposal of compulsion, however, proves that the Socialist thinks his idea will not be an acceptable one.

It is true, it is the cultured minority, not the numerical majority, whom he proposes to coerce, but his idea that compulsion and education will effect that similarity of character which will render equality of condition acceptable and compulsion unnecessary is evidently basic.

And herein we may perceive an extraordinary misapprehension of the principles of Natural Selection. Socialists adopt the principle that circumstances and surroundings make us what we are; that circumstances and surroundings are responsible for what we are and do; but our adaptability seems to blind them to the fact that the greater the variety to select from and the greater endowment which education gives for selection, the greater the consequent variation will be; that while we are plastic and adaptable we are so each according to his own natural proclivities, and that the same circumstances do not have the same effect upon all natures, but often quite an opposite and incalculable effect. The hope that equality of education will make men so equal in character and taste that equality of condition will be acceptable to them evidently renders them oblivious of the antagonistic fact that education provides all the requisites and facilities for variation, and that the greater the educational advantages you offer, although you offer the same to all, or inflict the same on all, the greater inducement you offer to variation and inequality, and that consequently the greater difficulty there will be in imposing equality of condition.

Only by stopping education, by levelling down in this respect also, only by drying up the various sources which feed and attract the various proclivities, can men ever be made more equal, more similar. It matters not in this connection whether you bestow education on men, or force it on them, or let them struggle for it,

the result of the education gained will be variation, inequality; that you get the same amount and the same sort of education absorbed by each and every one will not advance your hoped-for equality one whit; on the contrary, it will develop greater and ever greater inequality.

The more education there is, or the more extended it is, the greater will be the variation and inequality, there being ever more and more to select from; and the more the variation and inequality, the more repugnance will there be to equality of condition, and the greater will be the difficulty in imposing it. If the wretched equality creatures were all fed and educated alike, the able-minded among them would rebel against the dead level surroundings imposed. Nothing to strive for, nothing to win, never to feel that there is any choice, or chance, of anything not meted out and provided, will never commend itself, never be accepted by able or educated men. Increasing variation and inequality in arithmetical, nay, even probably geometrical ratio with increasing education, does not seem to have occurred to Socialists; they seem to have interpreted inequality as a desire to have that which other men have. Hence the remedy; this striving and struggling, this inequality must be got rid of by giving every one the same, which it is presumed will kill struggle and inequality with "one fell swoop." It is a childish thought; it is the means taken to still the childish craving for its companion's playthings, which often lose their charm with possession. The child is the father of the man, and this craving for whatever is different from what is possessed by the craver is, in the adult (to use Socialist phraseology), "snobbery." "Snobbery" being as rampant as Socialists imply, great credit ought to be given

them if they have discovered a remedy in equality of condition which would effectually prevent offence and craving for the possessions of others by not allowing a large house to grow up by the side of a small one. We venture to think, however, that this would not be a remedy for "snobbery" or any inordinate craving; that it would merely be a condition of "snobbery" triumphant; that if it were a cure for this, it would certainly not be a cure for inequality, unless education were stopped, and we have an inkling that it will be stopped, for it is very clear that equality of condition can never be maintained (even if it be tried), while education goes on, and as we are also told that it will be a society without art and literature, it looks very like no education at all. But how, even with no education, will equality of condition be maintained? Will not an efficient staff of police armed with rigorous right of search be necessary if every man is to spend his earnings as he likes and yet have nothing different from his neighbours? For although the outsides of the houses might be uniform, there could be no equality of condition if what was inside were different from that which other people had.

Considering the determined efforts men make to satisfy their wishes or requirements it is evident the first century or so of Socialism would be such a curse, such a scourge for all those vast numbers who fell rebelliously into its hands, as the world has never seen for cruelty of tyranny and rigour of repression and scrutiny. Later, when repression had done its work, after the iron shoe had been fastened round the infant's foot, after youth had been swaddled and bandaged, development checked here, emulation there, the different strongly pronounced variations and individual

peculiarities successfully stunted or strangled, rebellion might not be so rife, especially if in the meantime education had been restricted or stopped, and things might go more smoothly if they ever got so far.

The Socialist thinks a great deal of his handsome proposal to bestow equal advantages and equal opportunities on every one, and wonders how it is that the workers and the weary do not leap to the tempting morsel, especially as he says they will not be compelled to avail themselves of the good things offered. Men will certainly need no compelling to accept their daily food, shelter, a bed, and some clothing, together with many other good things; but they will certainly resist having any such limits as these, or even much wider ones, put to the satisfaction of their desires, although Socialists do not "see what a monarch or a millionaire could want more," and they will not consider the proposal with such equal limits attached (when the limitation is made plain) so great an advantage.

It can scarcely be called an advantage to be compelled to do what you do not wish to do, the alternative to work being starvation or a penal colony. "Work or starve would be the alternative set before each communal employée." . . . "And as the starvation would be deliberately incurred and voluntarily undergone, it would meet with no sympathy and no relief."[1]

It is compulsion to labour now which forms the principal punishment of those who transgress the laws, and this punishment inflicted by the community upon those whom it considers criminals, is to be inflicted by Socialists on every man for no transgression whatever.

[1] Annie Besant, "Fabian Essays."

Artisans do not at present empty their own ashpits, nor are they compelled to be scavengers or to clean sewers, but "if (under Socialism) a man is too much of a gentleman to empty his own ashpit,"[1] and if there is not sufficient work of the sort preferred by those applying for it, they will have to do that which is set them or to starve.[2]

The doctor, the engineer, and the official will certainly (unless the "manufacture of idiots" has been completely achieved) prove refractory when they receive no more pay than the scavenger and the ploughman, nor will they consider it an advantage to be told, if they are ruined or their professions are overcrowded (as the Fabian Essayists tell us they may be), that they may go into the fields to work, for they can do that now if they please, and they will be likely to give the State some trouble. But for this trouble Socialism is prepared; the fierce underlying malignity of all its utterances shows there will be no trifling, no half measures, in this matter of equality and compulsion. "Under Socialism we should oblige the loafer to work or perish."[3] Indeed, rigid equality will be necessary for the maintenance of the Socialist State.

Yet Socialists cannot be unaware that those nations upon whom the fewest restraints have been imposed have been those which have produced the greatest men; and that those countries where men have been most conspicuously unequal in condition, from Achilles and Thersites, from Alcibiades, Lycurgus, and the Spartan Helots onwards till to-day, are those alone which have been great; and that those States and Societies

[1] Nunquam, "Merrie England."
[2] Besant, "Fabian Essays."
[3] Nunquam, "Merrie England."

in which equality of condition has prevailed, where Communism, Socialism, or Collectivism has been tried, have never been great, and have produced no great men and no greatness of any sort; that they have given the world nothing, conferred no boon on the world, and done nothing for Humanity. Yet they have generally started with the greatest advantages, not struggling upwards as great nations have done, but bringing together all the knowledge and wealth acquired under Non-Socialism.

They have had as much land as they chose, and they have dealt as they pleased with it; but what greatness has ever come out of Salt Lake City, from the New Australians, the Oneidans, or any other of these Equality States?

But there is one great difference (in fact, it is the only essential difference) between these equality States and the Socialism which is rearing its head in England; neither the Mormons nor any other Socialistic States resting upon the primal principle of equality which have tried, and are trying, the doctrines of Socialism have ever been rapacious and burglarious; none of these States have ever aimed, as far as the world knows, at appropriating what was not their own; they have had no schemes of spoliation and compulsion; those who did not join them voluntarily were not to be captured and forced to work or starve; the members of these communities have all joined them of their own free-will, not desiring to bring with them more than belonged to them, not envying, nor coveting, and neither separately nor collectively desiring, when joining for their common object, to lay burglarious hands on the wealth of the neighbouring States, nor on that of their own country, nor on the goods of their fellow-men,

whether the instruments of production and exchange or not. They have shown no desire to seize the land, the machinery, the money, the pictures, the books, the printing-presses of those from whom they disagree and whom they left. They had all one common desire: to share the common lot and attain equality of condition; they have all been failures, and whatever they may have done for themselves (and it has not been such as to attract mankind), they have done nothing for the world, for humanity; Socialists would scarcely allow that it was because equality of condition could not bring forth good fruit unless it were arrived at by compulsion. Could it be then that the reason of their failure was that they had not the atrocious arrogance and malignity of conceiving the idea of founding their equality upon plunder, and of compelling all those who came within the reach of their physical force to surrender their possessions and bow to their laws with the alternative of starvation and a penal colony? For these States have embodied in their systems all the Socialist's ideas and aims with the exception of this one, this one scheme of robbery. They have experimented on their own persons and their own goods; they have never aimed at experimenting on the persons and goods of others, and have never thought it necessary to capture a nation and its wealth before starting. The unenviable notoriety has been left for Socialists alone of proposing to test their ideas upon other people —other unwilling and resisting people—and upon the goods they intend to despoil them of.

Socialism has neither in its idea of equality, nor in any other of its ideas, anything new in it; it is as old as the hills, except this idea of universal plunder, this intention to experiment on the property of others and

on their unwilling persons. Every one of their ideas, either separately or collectively, has been tried by others. The Boers dislike machinery; they would not have it, nor competition and commerce if they could help it, within their borders, and they tax severely and exclude from all rights which free men are accustomed to exercise all those who come within their sphere, and with the money thus extracted they build forts and buy arms to use against those who object to tyranny and taxation; and with Boers Socialists have much sympathy; but having denounced machinery and commerce they do not indulge in these things, and they have not proclaimed that they intend to seize and work the mines of those whom they tax and to whom they refuse a voice in public affairs; they have expressed no desire to capture the owners of the gold and their wealth and compel them to labour as they see fit in the fields or otherwise, they themselves using the machinery and mines of the captured.

The curious point of this the only new part—plunder and compulsion—of the old Socialist idea is, that whereas equality having had many trials under very advantageous circumstances, *e.g.*, as much land as was desired, plenty of money and goods, the concurrent and voluntary efforts of enthusiastic and eager adherents, and having always failed to bring about a good result to the world at large, Socialists proclaim that equality must succeed when founded on confiscation and force.

If those equalitarian societies which exist had been founded on appropriation of other people's goods and on compulsion, it might have been alleged or imagined that an equalitarian State would succeed in producing something superior, and be of some value, if tried with voluntary efforts and gifts; but the retrograde idea

(and retrogression is the distinguishing feature of Socialism in all its parts) that when having been tried honestly and voluntarily it failed it could succeed when tried dishonestly and compulsorily has been left for the Socialist mind to conceive. It is, however, a bold idea, for the wealth of the world, or the wealth of the richest country of the world, and the land which is in the centre of civilisation will give such a chance and such power as no previous section of mankind has ever had to experiment with. There is probably very little which cannot be achieved under such circumstances even by those who cannot achieve anything without such aids; so due credit must be given for the novelty and acuteness of this part of the Socialist idea.

It would not, however, be astonishing if, when this enormous prize had been conquered, Socialists followed the example of some of their humbler though honest prototypes and, abandoning the idea of performing their share of the necessary work of the world (if they found those they had despoiled not sufficient for the labour required), imported labourers and servants, without placing them on a footing of equality with their masters. For equality so rigidly and sincerely practised in these existing States has ended in some cases in importing a class to labour for the importers.

Equality, so often and so thoroughly tried, has never contributed to progress and culture, nor to the growth of any sort of higher life, nor to any other desirable result whatever except the material comfort of a few very ordinary men in their very ordinary life. These seem to be sufficiently and equally fed, clothed, and housed; we hear, it is true, of bickerings and envyings and jealousies; the lowest characteristics do not seem

by any means eradicated or lessened; but no higher and better men than those Non-Socialism produces (but only far inferior ones), no distinguished intellects, no noble characters whatever have issued from societies of Equalitarians; and all that is known leads to the distinct conclusion that men in these States have decidedly retrograded. No works of art of any sort, much less surpassing, or even rivalling, ours in our inequality States; no great literary or learned works, no inventions, no discoveries; no great man of any kind, poet, artist, scientist, statesman, explorer, inventor, philosopher, musician; no greatness, nor any rare, fine, quality has ever come out of equality States; no exemplary energy, no beauty, no courage, no devotion, nothing contributing to the elevation of life nor to the improvement of the world. Not even a single example of distinguished goodness or worthiness, nothing to help us, nothing to lighten our darkness, nothing to encourage, to strengthen, to support; no benefactor, no ray of light; only dense, solid, equal twilight; equal, uncompeting, unemulative flatness, dreariness, waste, and stagnation. Yet these States have been in existence long enough for more than one generation of men to have emerged!

If the former advocates of equality did not improve while experimenting on themselves we might surely have expected radiant surprises to have shone forth in the succeeding generations, which by heredity and training had the double benefit of all equality could bestow; they might surely have profited to some extent, and have brilliantly outstripped the offspring of the down-trodden, oppressed, wage-earning class in the countries under Non-Socialist systems. But what do we find? The very reverse; the contrary of the re-

sults which Socialists predict with such certainty. Numbers of great men, under Non-Socialism, have arisen from the labouring classes during this century, and the period as a whole has produced genius that has never been surpassed in the history of the world. It might be asked whether the working man sees any ideal or any state at which he would like to arrive, or like to see his countrymen arrive, among the Mormons or Oneidans, or in any equality State?

It may be an open question as to whether more average ordinary happiness has been gained there; it is no open question that such happiness has been, if any, gained at the expense of intellectual growth; that far from a higher type of men having been evolved a lower and stereotyped one is all that has emerged. We see that after a century of trial in these American societies of the Socialist's primary principle, equality has done nothing for society, for the world, for humanity; yet, in full view of all these experiments, with their results in Mormonism, Oneidism, New Australianism and many others before their eyes, Socialists claim that equality of condition is good for mankind, and that from it will be evolved a higher type of man, a type so much higher than the present type that it might be more correctly called a different type.

It is no exaggeration to say that the examples we have show the very reverse. Socialists protest that freedom will for the first time exist when equality is established; but freedom induces development, development induces variation and inequality; therefore (to say nothing of the compulsion, about which there is no mistake) Socialists cannot really desire or intend freedom. For if development is to increase (as it must with freedom) and consequently inequality, even were

it only in arithmetical ratio, how will this increasing inequality of character become more adaptable to equality of condition? Freedom is conducive even to such variation as we see in eccentricity, which is in the very essence of natural selection; eccentricity is the greatest variation from the ordinary man; the greatest variation from equality is in the eccentric man, he who requires and makes all his conditions different from those of other men. If the conditions and surroundings produced him they produced in him what they did not produce in others, and he acts on circumstances and conditions as other men do not act; he it is who will not writhe in the chains of conformity nor ever in those of equality; he breaks them though he break with all his fellow-men. This is what the Socialist means to prevent.

Men of talent and of genius also are they who do not run in the same orbit as the ordinary man; they are not guided and governed by the same ideas and promptings as those which govern the average man. As individuals develope, they develope away from, not towards, each other, as Socialists would have us believe in professing that equality would be accepted by the best men without compulsion; they would have us believe that development would not be hindered by equal conditions, that "true liberty" can reign where men are bound in the iron fetters of a life arranged for all by some. But freedom and development there cannot be when all are guided into the same path, when all feet are forced into the same iron shoe and all brought to equality of size. Equality of feet, like equality of condition, can never exist where men are allowed to run, jump, or walk as they please, nor at all with growth and development;

with freedom men will burst the bonds of equality while a spark of energy and spirit fire them.

This is the pith of the matter; this is the question between us: Is it conducive to the welfare of humanity that dissimilar individuals be forced into the iron shoe of equality of condition? Conducive to the material comfort of a class it may be, and conducive to the happiness of the average little man, but conducive to the welfare of humanity it cannot be.

Socialists might succeed, as they say they will, in forcing a nation into the fetters of equality; but if they did, its strength, its individuality, its life would die, if the invader from over the seas gave it time to perish. The vigorous, striving, developing, individuals whom it had encased would shrivel and deteriorate till there was never an illuminating spark to surprise or arouse their placid vision. The despicable evenly conditioned things would eat, drink, sleep, and die—having lived in equal creature comfort, having always had enough beef, beer, coats, beds—the Socialist's paradise attained—everything provided for everybody which the Socialist idea thought necessary; under Ideal Socialism "there would be nothing for the official to steal but food and clothing," and "what could a monarch or a millionaire want more?"[1]

The working-man may probably not see this as plainly as those who have more time for thought, and that to which he naturally attaches the first importance is sufficiency of food and clothing; he is likely, therefore, to be caught (not being shown the other side) by a seductive prospect of comfort, and may perhaps not be altogether displeased at seeing others brought down to his level. But it behoves those who need

[1] Nunquam, "Merrie England."

something more than food and clothing, and the dead level of material life, whose talents enable them and entitle them to attain what they require, to ask themselves where would culture and intellect, the arts and sciences, music, literature, elegance, and refinement, be when everything was equal.

It must be remarked that this complete dearth is to be attained under Ideal Socialism, and that Practical Socialism is only "the preliminary step."[1] This is what the whole of the Socialist writings convey, although it is not always plainly set forth. But all the great Socialist leaders and lights, as well as all the lesser luminaries, embody this in their gospel: food, clothing, and creature comforts for all, and labour for all, and no man to have anything more or better than his neighbour.

Mr. William Morris says it would be an age without art and literature, and the Fabian Essayists say that men could not be allowed to possess pictures, tools, or anything which might be desired by others or be desirable for them. "If we wish all Raphael's pictures to be freely accessible to every one, we must prevent men not merely from exhibiting them for payment, but from owning them." "This argument applies to other things besides Raphael's pictures. If we allow a man to own a printing press, or a plough, or a set of bookbinder's tools, or a lease of a house or farm, we must allow him so to employ his possession that he may, without injuring his neighbour, get from it the greatest possible advantage; otherwise, seeing that the community is not responsible for its intelligent use, any interference on the part of the community may well result in no intelligent

[1] Nunquam, "Merrie England."

use being made of it at all; in which event all privately owned materials of industry not actually being used by their owners would be as entirely wasted as if they were the subjects of a Chancery suit."[1]

Mr. Morris certainly hopes that a new art and literature would arise when men were "purified" and altogether different from what they are now. When would that be? A few centuries later? The answer would involve a nice calculation of metaphysical possibilities which few would think it wise or profitable to enter upon, seeing that the result would be at the best but vague and uncertain. Nor would even a far distant future certainty indemnify those who were now deprived of all that is to them as the breath of life; for martyrs are not found by millions, although one man sacrifice himself for the people, or for very doubtful good; nor is life without art and literature conducive to future mental production. Whether all these plans are practicable is quite another question. Socialists believe they are and intend them to be, so struggle and bloodshed are a certainty; and the aim is clear, whether avowed or veiled—equality of character and intellect as well as of surroundings.

There would be the transition during Practical Socialism, in which time equality of condition only is expected; during this preliminary step something of the old time would be struggled for by the rebels; there would be a good deal of hiding away in holes and corners, a good deal of ferretting and confiscation at every turn; but when desire, intellect, energy, and resistance had been sufficiently crushed, the ideal would have been reached; equality of intellect as well as of condition would be as complete as it possibly could be.

[1] Besant, "Fabian Essays."

It is certain no means could be better chosen than those the Socialist selects for the equalisation of character and intellect. Nothing is so dwarfing as dead level surroundings from which there is no escape, and Socialism intends this to be dwarfing, and intends to retard those who would rise by their own strength, who are indeed the men in whom greatness resides and those whom it is intended should be deprived of the results of their achievements. Nunquam asks, "Why should a clever man want more than an average worker, if the workman's pay is enough for his wants . . . why should an artist want more? The workman having enough, should the artist have more than enough? He does not need it. He cannot use it."

Socialists think that those to whom we owe most should receive less from us than those who render little. "What is the Socialist view of the duties of those who are especially gifted by nature? That they owe a larger return to the community than those who are less naturally gifted."[1] Mrs. Besant informs us that ". . . sustenance received will be allotted by the State in such a way as shall ensure no inequality."[2] Mr. Belfort Bax says: "the utmost, however, that is contemplated by the Socialist is his" (the gifted man) "being placed on an equal economical footing with his naturally inferior brother."[3] Nothing can be more opposed than this to the Non-Socialist view that we owe a debt to these gifted natures which we can never repay, and that talent is generally inadequately remunerated. Under Socialism all those who are intellectually above their fellows are to be discouraged from achievement, and disabled for it by not being allowed the full use of

[1] J. L. Jones, "Catechism." [2] "Fabian Essays."
[3] Belfort Bax, "Religion of Socialism."

their time nor full control over their actions, and by withholding from them the value of their work. The hope and intention of Socialism is that by compelling a man "to empty his own ashpit," do his own domestic work (when those "dehumanised beings," servants, are no longer there to do it for him) and take his share of the work of producing the necessaries of life that his other work will not surpass that of those who have been educated and relieved of the duties which he is to do for himself; and that if it does, the result of it shall be divided equally among those who are incapable of doing what he has done; who indeed have a prior right to it, inasmuch as he has the happiness of being capable, and they must have the equalising and indemnifying happiness of receiving the reward which belongs to him.

"Why the man who possesses faculties which must of themselves bring him honour, love, obedience, troops of friends," . . . "should expect, in addition to all these things and by way of right, to have a lion's share of mere material luxuries, is perhaps one of the greatest moral phenomena."[1] And does not Marx say the superior height of a large house would arouse discontent, that this must not be, that things must be kept equal? Distinguished talent makes poor souls feel uncomfortably that their neighbours think them men of "small pretensions." Men must not have the discomfort of feeling that they will be thought less than other men, though they may be infinitely less; no man must tower above his fellow-men. Besides, if a neighbour's house would so excite a man's envy, how much more hurtful to his pride and reputation would it be if the neighbour, the man himself, towered

[1] Belfort Bax.

above him intellectually in attainments, in distinction, and in the honour and respect such attainments would command?

Marx, our foreign master, he at whose feet all Socialists sit, of whose doctrines all our Socialist writings are mere dilutions, cooked-up scraps (whose pupil and disciple, Friedrich Engels, is the German head of our present English Socialism), says: This must not be; men must not be made discontented by seeing anything greater than themselves. "Socialism, Communism, or whatever else we may call it" (to use the words of a notorious Socialist) could not exist if it were otherwise.

Equality, with all its disastrous and fatal consequences, is inherent in Socialism, is the very soul and body of Socialism; the greater and more complete the equality the more completely is the Socialist's aim attained, and the greater is the danger and the more stupendous the disaster to all classes, to all men, to the nation, to the world. When the day of Socialist victory comes and the Socialist State is established, if men have not arrived at agreement with the Socialist idea, they will have to stifle all opposition, all sense of acute differences, all desire to express and enforce their own views, or they must rebel. Socialists would not have gone through all that they will have to go through to establish Socialism without being prepared to try to make their State a permanent success by relentlessly crushing rebellion and enforcing conformity at all costs. For although they would not be able to start their State at all without a majority of able-bodied persons of the same opinions and desires as themselves, there would be a large minority remaining (after any amount of bloodshed) in the rankest, strongest, and most rebellious opposition, who would have to be

coerced to the extremest extent to ensure the peaceable and possible working of the State machinery.

It would be interesting to know what length of time Socialists reckon it would take to crush antagonism, and how long active coercion would have to be in force; what the system of discipline for the young would be, whom even at present a very considerable amount of care and watchfulness scarcely keep within bounds, and for whom a very strictly administered set of rules (which are often, in spite of penalties, transgressed) are needed to keep individuality within anything like the necessary restraints. A system very much more severe than anything which is known to our schools would have to be invented to crush out all the inequalities which appear in school-boy life and which influence the divergent courses and careers each boy sets out upon when he parts from his fellows, and this discipline and watchfulness would have to be continued more or less through life if men were to be prevented from breaking away to their old emulative and competitive tendencies.

And when passivity was achieved, when the keenness of desire was gone, together with the fierce longing to surpass and to outstrip, growth would have ceased and retrogression be carrying men on to swift decay.

There is one thing, however, which does not seem to have struck Socialists; repressive arrangements may deteriorate intellect, level down and dwarf originality and all that is not animal in man, but as the tiger will never be evolved from the lamb nor the lamb from the tiger, so equality will never trample out nor equalise men's passions. Enough of the tiger appears stealthily creeping through Socialist pages to evoke the latent tiger in their victims. The struggle between

equality and inequality will not be a mild one when the Socialist tiger springs from his lair behind his prey: "Thus the coming struggle between 'Haves' and 'Have-nots' will be a conflict of parties each perfectly conscious of what it is fighting about, and fully alive to the life and death importance of the issues at stake."[1]

Organisation, unscrupulousness, perhaps also numbers, will be on the tiger's side when he leaps forth, but it will not be a lamb he will have to struggle with, it will not be a lamb he will lead into captivity, and that life and death struggle will decide whether England, in her glorious freedom and inequality of intellect, shall still shine in the constellation of civilisation, a star of the first magnitude illumining the world from the West, or whether she will go down (never again to raise her fame-crowned head) in the deadly grip of Equality.

[1] Hubert Bland, "Fabian Essays."

CHAPTER VII

PRIVATE PROPERTY (LAND)

PRIVATE property may be divided into two sections, Land and Capital. These include all the means of production and exchange—*i.e.*—wealth of every description, whether money or any other commodity, article, or gift of Nature.

Socialism has given a very distinct pronouncement against private property of every description; individual possession is entirely incompatible with its doctrines, each and all. "All wealth is plunder," is concise and clear. As also is this: "That a man has riches in the bank is a crime sufficient to send him to hell."[1] These are the ethical reasons why (on the basis of Socialist justice) private property is to be abolished.

That section of Socialism (the section indeed which involves the whole of Socialism, upon which the whole hangs) which deals with property may also be divided into two parts; the one deals with the transfer of wealth from its present owners to the Socialist State; the second deals with the construction and maintenance of a system of no private property, and the prevention of the accumulation of private property in the Socialist future.

The abolition of the institution of private property is naturally the first thing to engage the attention,

[1] Benson.

being in the fore-front, as it were, of the battle, and made, as it is, the *sine quâ non* of the Socialist system.

Wealth divides itself broadly into two parts: Land and Capital, with the latter of which all wealth of whatever description, which is not land, may be properly classed. The principal ground upon which both Land and Capital have to be considered is ethical, for it is on this ground that the doctrines regarding them are pressed on public attention.

But the Socialist doctrines and accusations concerning land are different from those which concern capital and wealth other than land, although the accusation of theft applies equally to all; for, as regards land, the whole question of rightful possession turns upon the following questions:—

1st. Whether land acquired by conquest from those who acquired it by conquest, and so on back to those who found a no-man's-land—*i.e.* land over a small portion of which a handful of savages hunted—can be said to be stolen?

2nd. Whether those holding such lands by inheritance, bequest, or purchase, from their legally constituted owners can be accurately said to be thieves and the receivers of stolen goods a thousand years after the original acquisition of these lands by conquest and gift?

3rd. Whether the working classes are the rightful heirs of any original rightful owners?

4th. Whether Humanity in general can be the rightful owner of the lands of Great Britain, or of any other particular country?

5th. Whether any persons have a right to select any portion of Humanity they see fit as the recipient of such lands?

It is clear, however, that the possession of land stands upon a different footing from that of all other sorts of wealth. For it is not alleged that money or any of the means of production have been stolen bodily, as land is said to have been stolen; capitalists and others who possess movable wealth are not accused of laying hands upon a certain amassed sum or a certain quantity of machinery and forcibly appropriating it, as a burglar forcibly extracts a box of jewels or plate from a barred house, but of fraudulently waylaying the money which it is alleged arises from, and belongs to, manual labour on its road from the payer to the payee, by enticing the labourer to sell himself for a certain sum, from which contract he cannot and does not try to get free, being perfectly unaware that the sums the capitalist is said to intercept belong of right to him, who has supplied all that is manual in the production of the goods from which the money arises.

The accusation of theft as touching all wealth other than land turns entirely upon the question whether the doctrine of value propounded by Karl Marx is true or false; upon that, and that alone, this accusation in this connection (*i.e.* of all wealth other than land) rests to be substantiated or withdrawn. The accusation concerning the possession of land stands upon a much simpler footing.

It is alleged (1.) that those who own the land stole it bodily from its rightful owners; (2.) that the posterity of those dispossessed original owners stand landless at our doors demanding their own.

To these allegations we reply: that they are fictions —fictions in every particular, and that the inventors of them must make their accusation good:—

1st. By showing whom the land was stolen from.

2nd. That those from whom it is said to be stolen were in rightful possession of it, that they had not stolen it.

3rd. That those who claim it are the lineal descendants of those who were the original rightful owners.

And we aver (1st) that those men who are said to have been robbed had themselves killed the preceding owners and appropriated their possessions; (2nd) that those said to be their posterity are not the descendants of any rightful owners; (3rd) that the accuser shifts his ground with regard to the claimant, first putting forward the putative posterity of certain selected appropriators of the land in question and then slipping others—viz., Humanity at large—into the place of ancestor and posterity; (4th) that if he, the accuser, gets possession of the land, he has no intention of handing it to either of the alleged claimants he has put forward; and (5th) that he intends to keep what he says belongs to certain descendants of certain Anglo-Saxons, or to Humanity, and administer it for the benefit of himself, his colleagues and friends, and of such persons as think with him.

For trial this question must come to the bar of Justice, where indeed we are arraigned and summoned by the accusers who demand expropriation and the transfer of land from its owners to themselves on the ground not of expediency but of justice.

We are told that the landowners of this country take £135,000,000 directly of the annual production of thirteen hundred millions. I shall not criticise these figures, as it is immaterial to the argument whether the sum is £135,000,000, or more or less. For although it were much more, if the

owners came by it honestly they are not thieves; and if it were only a modicum of the sum named, it would be equally imperative to prove or disprove the accusation of theft.

The question is: How did the landowners come by the land? If a thing is stolen, it must be stolen from somebody — whom then was it stolen from? Here are the thieves, here are the subjects stolen, where are the persons from whom they were stolen?

Here we are, says the Socialist, I and my friends.

On what ground do you claim?

We claim it on the ground that each individual has a right to the soil on which he is born.

By what law or sanction has he this right? Whence does he derive this right?

We claim it also on the ground that "all wealth is plunder," and that you have all the land and we have none.

Although the subject is land, the most suitable answer to this is: Then hand over to us those gold chronometers some of you wear. We are hard-working men, and we have no chronometers. Also kindly hand over the £27,000 Friedrich Engels left. We have never yet been able to save or earn £1000, and we have many friends in the same position. A few watches and this £27,000 will help us.[1]

We feel especially sorry for poor Engels and the friends to whom he has left his wealth, and for all Socialists who have gold watches. It is hard for them that their doctrines should be propounded by their friends in such unpleasant form as—*e.g.*—"No man ever became rich by his own exertions."

[1] Another recently deceased and eminent Socialist, William Morris, left upwards of £50,000.

By what right do we demand them? By this: "You must admit you hold them by superior force, therefore that I have a right to take them by superior force."[1] Your own arguments, Mr. Bax, you cannot therefore refuse to let us take possession of your friends' property.

There is a difference is there? You bought those chronometers? And you earned the money? or it was left to you by Friedrich Engels or William Morris (who left their money to their *friends*, not to Humanity) or by some other? So this wealth is not theft, and is not to be handed over to us, who have neither money nor chronometers. Very disappointing; for we are afraid the landowners, from whom we were also (after reading your learned books and getting your doctrines by heart) expecting to get something handsome, say the same as you do: that they bought what they own, or that it was bequeathed to them, or inherited by them from those who believed they held it as honestly as you believe you hold honestly what is yours.

But this is the very point in dispute. Did they (those former bequeathers) come honestly by it? It is clear we have to go a long way back, much farther back than Friedrich Engels or William Morris where land is concerned. Mr. Bax takes the trouble to go back as far as Charles II. for an instance of landowners' guilt, and says that the Merry Monarch gave land to an immoral person. We are afraid he did. Are we to inquire into the character of all the persons who have watches or wealth left to them or given to them? And are all the people who inherit the fortunes of Socialists receivers of stolen goods?

But why, we wonder, does Mr. Bax choose Charles II.

[1] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Socialism."

for his example? Why not go back to fasten the guilt on the right and original thief—to William the Conqueror, who was the principal disposer and settler of lands in this country? He came, saw, and conquered, and disposed of his conquest as he saw fit. But he again is a thief; so this will not do. No honest person can be satisfied till the rightful owner of stolen property is found. We must find him. There were Danes, Saxons, Vikings (Creek-kings, who were pirates merely) and others. Alas, they were all dreadful thieves. It was the fashion. It was thought then that if you conquered a country you had a right to it.

Not so to-day it seems.

For poor little Japan had to give up Port Arthur and Korea.

Now Russia quietly takes all this without any fighting at all.

Socialists do not believe that charity begins at home (if they did there would be fewer of them in England), and they think national boundaries should be swept away. Will the Socialist urge Lord Salisbury to let him go over and expropriate Russia and recover this large slice of territory on which Chinamen were born? Here he would catch the thief in *flagrante delicto*; no searching after truth would be required; he would not be on the horns of any dilemma if he handed Manchuria over to Manchurians; or if Manchurians stole the land (which according to Socialist doctrine they must have done) were he to keep it for himself and his friends, *i.e.* that portion of humanity who think as he thinks. Would he be right in expropriating Russia, and appropriating the land Russia had stolen? And if he were right, why should not Russia be right in her expropriating and appropriating business? And if

Russia were not right and we were not right, why should the Socialist be right in expropriating us and appropriating the land the Norman stole?

But we must return to those Teutonic pirates who ravaged our island to find the original thief. We cannot get much farther back, however, than Julius Cæsar. He presumably came upon the rightful owners. There may have been a race before the Celts, but the Celt will probably satisfy every one as being the real original savage Humanity who owned the lands of Great Britain. Celts may stand to us, at all events, as well as any other as the original lords of the soil, or, in Socialist speech the "Humanity" to whom the soil of Britain belonged. It is a far cry, but in a case of robbery no pains must be spared; it is as important to find the owner of the stolen goods, or his rightful heirs, as to punish the descendants of the original robbers.

Socialists, we imagine, while naturally indignant with these descendants of the original robbers of one or two thousand years ago (who, however, never heard before that they were the receivers of stolen goods, seeing that neither the State nor the community—the descendants of the robbers and the robbed—ever thought it was incumbent upon them to look into the matter) will agree that it is imperative that the right man should get his own now, and that the property should not again fall into the wrong hands. It is necessary then to find the original honest possessor and his rightful heirs, unless the land is to be handed over to Humanity at large, which would leave the Socialist out in the cold, and that would not do, for he is the claimant. If the Socialist would believe us, we would assure him we are all as anxious to possess only that which is rightfully our own as he is to possess that

which is ours, and to give to the robbed everything they were robbed of; but we must find out who the men were who were robbed of that which they had not stolen, or it is clear nothing can be done.

We are not sure whether Socialists generally have watches or property; we are inclined to think they have not, seeing that "all wealth is plunder;" but if they have, we are sure they would be as desirous as we are to restore their property to the rightful owners if it were stolen before they came into possession of it; and also that they would be careful not to hand it over to any gang of thieves who claimed it, on the ground that they had none of their own, or that they were Humanity in search of it.

Back then to Julius Cæsar and the savages he found in Britain. If there were a race before these (and there probably was) we cannot find them, and we do not know that they were robbed by the Celts Cæsar found. We think, however, we have got hold of the rightful owner in Julius Cæsar's Celt. He is a man, too, we know something about, which is an advantage. He was a blue-painted, fighting, brave, and handsome savage. Blood-shedding to him was as the pouring out of wine, and his altars ran red with the blood of his race. This evidently is the individual who represents the Humanity to whom we owe the land. Unfortunately Julius Cæsar killed him and his State. It is to be feared too he took possession of his land by force.

The Romans also committed the heinous crime of enclosing a good deal of the appropriated land, making excellent roads through it, and, worse than all, introducing the arts of civilisation, with their horrible inherent accompaniment, commerce.

It is sad to think, when we reflect on the happy

idyllic state of the woad-stained Celt in his "unweeded garden" the oak-tangled thicket of Britain, that the terrible institution of private property in land had here, in England, its probable beginning at this time. For, as we all know, the enclosure and ownership of land generally accompanies agriculture, especially the agriculture in which skill and knowledge, as distinguished from labour, is involved. The Celts, being innocent of agriculture, must in fairness be acquitted of the crime of enclosing and clearing ground; there is no reason for suspecting them of this; and to do justice to the later hordes of pirates, Jutes, Vikings, and others, who swarmed successively over Britain, it must be admitted that they destroyed the property the Romans had held and all their appropriating work, such as the enclosing walls and clearings as far as they could, and that one set of Teuton savages after another during several hundred years wrecked what their predecessors, whether Romans, Danes, Angles or Saxons, had succeeded in appropriating, fencing and tilling. To these various successive invaders the merit must be ascribed of expropriating and appropriating—of, in fact, destroying all private property in land wherever they went and of dividing all the wealth they acquired between themselves and their adherents.

This constant expropriation and appropriation, this destruction of enclosed lands, and of private property, was presumably a service to Humanity, and this no doubt is the reason why the Socialist takes these pre-Norman Anglo-Saxons under his protection and constitutes them the progenitors of those he wishes to induce to do the same now.

Although the Conqueror committed the crimes of conquest and appropriation, it was surely right from a

Socialist point of view that some one, even a thousand years ago, should expropriate the piratical hordes who had taken possession of our Britain, although they were Angles and Saxons; for we have not yet heard why pre-emption, or the right of theft, or absolution, should be granted to these, and not to the descendants of Normans, as it is to be feared the possessors of land in England partly are.

Julius Cæsar was clearly wrong in expropriating the Humanity who owned the soil of Britain, but those Romans who succeeded him did their utmost towards indemnification by leaving a vastly more valuable property to be scrambled for by Humanity. And Humanity soon came and gave us the delightful spectacle the noble savage usually yields, of preying upon his fellow-man and destroying his fenced fields, his enclosures, his private property, everything civilisation has built up.

It would be a pity if the Socialist were to destroy (in his struggle for appropriation) as the Dane, the Saxon, and the Teuton destroyed, and as the dock-strikers in the Socialist strike of 1889 (in which Mr. John Burns became eminent) destroyed in a great measure the trade of the port of London. It is to be feared he will, as he expresses his determination to destroy civilisation, and everything except the money and machinery and all such wealth as he can seize. Unfortunately we see that destruction generally accompanies expropriation, and that appropriation takes place quite irrespectively of the rightful owners. When booty is in question, no one (except ourselves, and of course the Socialist) seems to think of the rightful owner at all. This is not so much to be wondered at as that when honesty, restitution, and justice are talked of, the rightful owner is

equally disregarded. This is a very curious fact. It is an error we are surprised to see Socialists fall into, for they are honest men they say, and want nothing for themselves, only everything for Humanity, which is, for by far the greater part, Non-Socialist; although, to judge from the Socialist's intention to appropriate the property of Non-Socialists and give it to Humanity (who are principally Non-Socialists) he is ignorant of this.

William, being a conqueror and "a tyrant," and acting merely in accordance with his lights, talked not at all about "justice" and "humanity," and probably thought about them still less, otherwise he would no doubt have punished those wicked Angles and Saxons (of whom Socialists seem to claim that their client the Proletariat is the descendant and heir), have stopped their sporting propensities, and have set them all to the "necessary work of production," or sent them to "a penal colony," and have delivered the expropriated land of Great Britain to its original rightful owners whomsoever they were. There is only one excuse to be made for his failure to do this (and this failure is the only blameworthy part of his conduct from the Socialist point of view, seeing that "confiscation is right and justice"), and that is the great difficulty he would have had to find the rightful owners. The only other course open to him after this rightful expropriation and just confiscation, failing to find the right Humanity, the real original owners from whom the land was stolen, was to go away and leave it to the wolves. Perhaps there were no wolves then of the sort Mr. Burns assures us there are now. If he had done this—if "the wolves" of Mr. Burns (Socialists) had existed then—the Conqueror would have been as just and wise a man as the

Socialist himself, and rather more disinterested; if he had acted as a just man should he would have carried out the confiscation which is Socialist "right and justice" in the case of all those Anglo-Saxons (the assumed ancestors of the Proletariat) who owned the conquered lands, and he would have left the confiscated property to the wolves.

Unfortunately for his reputation, he did precisely what the Socialist proposes to do, *i.e.*, he placed the country in the hands of the men who fought with him for the booty, and who thought as he thought about it. If he had not appropriated as well as expropriated it and held it for, or given it to, those who helped him to get the land, and if England could have remained as isolated as the Red Indians of America or the Maories of New Zealand, it is probable we should have been in that highly desirable state to-day in which we find these savages.

These views do not arise from any dislike of our Anglo-Saxon forefathers, far from it; we are fond of them, and we have the highest opinion of the intelligence of the Red Indian and the Maori; and not because our opinion of the Conqueror as an amiable, peace-loving, man is high. Quite the reverse; we think if he could have got at America or Australia, he would have carried fire and sword there also, and he would certainly also have parcelled out the land and given it to men who would have cleared and enclosed it and owned it, and have set the natives to work (just as the Socialist intends to set the Non-Socialist to work) quite regardless of the fact that the land had been theirs and that they had preferred to have it as it was; and these men would have transmitted the wickedly appropriated, owned, enclosed, and cultivated

land, with the houses and buildings upon it, to their heirs, or to those who bought it of them; and thus "the curse of civilisation" would have begun to spread over New Zealand and the backwoods of America a thousand years ago, as it did over England.

It is not to be denied that it was in this way private property in land came about. Lands were conquered and parcelled out, and those who acquired and settled on them set the natives to work (and probably also the lords who had owned the lands, just as the Socialists mean to do) to clear, enclose, and protect from pillage. It will be remembered that it is not a question here of how wealth arises either in connection with land or capital—this falls to be discussed in the examination of the theory of Karl Marx (which is that it arises entirely from labour)—it is merely a question here of how land came into the possession of its present owners.

But if the men of to-day who hold the land either by the purchase or transmission which has been going on during a thousand years are the receivers of stolen goods, we must go farther back than the Conqueror, than the piratical Jutes, Danes, Angles, Saxons, and Teutons, all of whom conquered (stole?) it, or received it as conquered (stolen?) goods, as the Conqueror and his Barons did; farther than the first importers of "the curse of civilisation," the Romans; we must go back, as aforesaid, to the Celts, the real ancient Briton himself. He alone is rightful Humanity here, for the Socialist will scarcely say the Chinaman or the Russian is; and if not they, why then the Teuton or the German, or the English "Proletariat," who is only at best the descendant (according to the Socialist) of Danish, Saxon, or Teuton conquerors?

If we mistake not, however, the Socialist is not pre-

pared to take quite so long a journey in his search for truth and the rightful Humanity as we are; he has evidently not had his time-machine properly fixed up; perhaps it has not had its final polishing and screwing, or is too rusty from having made so many journeys in search of his injured friends (the descendants of the dispossessed rightful owners who never stole or conquered anything) and wants repair. In any case, whatever may be the reason, we find him stopping just midway on his journey; he gets back about a thousand years, and there he stops—just about a thousand years short.

If there were no Board Schools, we should think his education had been neglected, and that he had never read any history which went back farther than "William the tyrant," as all the Socialistic historians of the day dub him, and probably not without reason. This, however, cannot be. Our laws are Socialistic enough to compel his parents to have him taught about the North Sea pirates and the Ancient Britons, so there is no excuse for him on this score. Then why does he stop in his investigations after truth just where properly they ought to have begun? Why was it inconvenient to him to proceed? Why could he not tear himself away from the roystering Saxon and continue his backward journey? We all have a weakness for our great heroes Arthur, Alfred, Harold, and Canute, —and even for Hengist and Horsa; but what is there so attractive about the state of things before the Conquest as to hold the Socialist in fetters he cannot break even in the pursuit of truth? What were the people like? They were a half-savage people, a quite savage people thought the more refined and cultured Norman. What were their occupations? their habits? It is sad

to relate (especially as the Socialist cannot get himself away from them), that they were often drunk, in fact, very rarely went to bed sober; "their principal food was swine's flesh," "coarse cakes," and "green pulse;" agriculture does not seem to have got very far with them, for wheaten bread was only for kings and princes.

Why then does the Socialist, in his search for the rightful owners of the land, tarry amid scenes of war, drunkenness, and "coarse sensuality?" Is it because he likes this constant state of expropriation and appropriation? Scarcely, for he himself only proposes to expropriate and appropriate once and for all, and thereafter to have to himself a future from which he shall not be dispossessed. We want to take him with us to find the real original victim; so we must get at the motive of his tarrying with the Saxon and the Dane. Can it be that he has any interested motive? Can it be that he is not willing to go farther because he wishes to make us believe that our labourers being principally, as he says, Anglo-Saxon in descent, are the lineally descended heirs of the villeins who were born and bred of the Teuton conquerors and savages who despoiled and ravaged Britain? We are afraid it is. It is rather weak, so weak that in the quantity of dust the Socialist throws about ordinary eyes can scarcely discern it, but notwithstanding they do manage to see it. Moreover, we find it in a good deal of Socialist teaching.

The villeins (the posterity of the pirates and savages from over the seas who ravaged and pillaged Britain) tilled some small portion of the land which their masters conquered—*sequitur*—the men who till the land to-day, and make coats, boots, and hats, are the descendants of these villeins—*sequitur*—rightful lords of all the soil of Britain. It is a very pretty argu-

ment and very logical. Ergo: the villeins did not own the land they tilled, therefore those who till the land to-day are the rightful owners of it, because they may or may not be partly descended from those who did or did not till it.

Ergo: the lords of the villeins who tilled did steal the land; therefore the labourers, conceivably descended from the villeins, who to-day till or do not till it, have a right to all the land of Great Britain.

It is not good enough; so we go back to the ancient Briton. Where is he? How many of these Britons were left by the time the Romans were settled? How much land did those same savages own? Ah! I can hear our Socialist saying: I thought so; it is clear enough why you go back to your ancient Britons; you know there are none of them left, and that they owned but little of the land, so you think yourself quite safe!

Precisely. We know there was no one robbed, the land which was conquered was owned by no one; comparatively small patches were hunted over by savages who were killed fighting in defence of their shores.

And we claim that the plaintiff shall now be nonsuited because: 1st. He fails to show who the rightful owners were who were robbed; and those persons whom he does indicate as the rightful owners are seen to be (on his own showing) descendants of pirates who appropriated the possessions of those whom they conquered and subjected. 2nd. Because if those persons whom he indicates as rightful claimants for the land did descend from those Teutons and Saxons who appropriated the land, it follows that Socialists are claiming what their ancestors acquired wrongfully and by superior force. 3rd. Because if Humanity is the rightful owner, Humanity does not consist of a mass of Germans, or

even of Englishmen. 4th. Because the Socialist will himself keep the land he urges our working-men to take by force, and will only give all the benefit which accrues from it to those who fight for him and are of his own way of thinking.

What the Socialist wants is to do what William the Conquerer did, viz., take the land for himself and for those who will fight for it, and who think as he thinks about it; and in order to get his army together he tries to identify those whom he calls the Proletariat with the Anglo-Saxons, and those whom he calls the Bourgeois (*i.e.*, all who are not Proletariats) with the Normans. He cannot do either one or the other, for there has been amalgamation; but if he could, it would not help him in the slightest, seeing the Anglo-Saxons never possessed anything they did not take by force from those who preceded them. Or, if he should repudiate such wish or attempt, he must state why he claims the land of England for Socialist Englishmen, Germans, and others, and not for Chinamen, who are a far more numerous Humanity than the Germans who are to be the preponderating element.

He is aware of all this, so he does not expatiate very much upon it; but as he has not had the courage to say he wants the land for himself and his friends, especially as the importers of this claim are all foreigners (principally Germans, which their names alone show—Bebel, Liebknecht, Engels)—he has found it necessary to invoke justice, honesty, and high morality, and has struck out boldly for Humanity. This may be very convenient as being vague, but Humanity includes all men of all nationalities—Chinamen, Russians, and others. Russia is suspected by Russophobes of having hankerings after English possessions, and Chinamen would, if they were

allowed, swarm all over England as well as America. And why not? Russians and Chinamen are as much Humanity as ourselves.

But the Socialist again stops and says: No. They are evidently not Humanity for him.

"What is necessary is that we face the fact, every day becoming plainer, that the determined attempt to raise the condition of the Proletariat in any single European country must be accompanied by a law of aliens. . . . It might increase national selfishness, and would probably endanger international good-will; it would require the drawing of a great many very difficult lines of distinction."[1]

But he is naturally going to welcome his German friends to England as Humanity, for it is the *Socialist* majority which is to form the Socialist State—not the majority of Englishmen; and if the German Socialists should get the upper hand in the Fatherland, the Englishman's greatest virtue will be to help them to invade England; to join the Germans here in England and help them and their invading countrymen to a share of the spoil. Hear him, hear the Socialist:—

"The only public opinion, the only will of the majority, which has any sort of claim to the recognition of the Socialist in the present day, is that of the majority of those who have like aspirations with him, . . . in other words, the will of the majority of the European Socialist party."[2] "It might then be a matter of life and death for Socialist Germany to forestall a military and economic isolation in the face of a reactionary European coalition by immediate action, especially against the stronghold of modern commercialism

[1] Graham Wallas, "Property under Socialism."
[2] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Socialism."

(England). Should such an invasion of the country take place, it would be the duty of every Socialist to do all in his power to assist the invaders to crush the will of the count-of-heads majority of the people of England."[1]

The land of Britain is thus clearly intended for the Humanity which consists of Germans and other foreign Socialist invaders.

The English working-man is to be "prodded" till he becomes the cat's-paw, and pulls the chestnuts out of the fire for the foreign Socialist to eat.

I think also it is clear—

1st. That the claimant and the accuser are one—*i.e.* the Socialist.

2nd. That in reality he claims the land of England for his party and his friends.

3rd. That he says he claims it for Humanity.

4th. That he really means to keep it for those only who think as he does or who will be useful to him.

5th. That when he has induced the English lower classes to seize it by force he intends to keep it in his own hands and those of his party to dispose of as seems best to them.

Let us now turn to the accused, to those who hold the land, and let us consider the land itself.

We know that the earth has never been made to yield up her increase in the form of *riches* to labour *alone*, and that when it has yielded the greatest amount of wealth, individual possession of it has always prevailed, the rights of private property have been upheld, and that ability has played a prominent part. In countries where there is but little individual possession, agriculture does not attain much perfection. "The wise and patient workman strikes his spade in here, and

[1] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Socialism."

with heavy toil can discover nothing but a poor quality of barley, some potatoes, and plentiful nettles, with a few dock leaves to cure his stings."[1]

If Mr. Bernard Shaw had left out the two first adjectives, he would have here stated the plain unvarnished truth; for the articles enumerated are the utmost that labour without ability ever extracted from the soil. He goes on to say: "Another man, searching for gold, comes upon a great hoard of coal, or taps a jet of petroleum. Thus is Man mocked by Earth his stepmother, and never knows as he tugs at her closed hand whether it contains diamonds or flints, good red wheat or a few blighted cabbages. Thus, too, he becomes a gambler, and scoffs at the theorists who prate of industry and honesty and equality."[2]

Not true at all that thus he becomes "a gambler." The *wise* and *patient* workman does not become a gambler, nor does he scoff at those who talk of "industry and honesty," unless incited thereto and to impatience by sophistical talk. He remains a workman to the end, unless Ability and individual possession come to his aid. Ability knows what sort of land will yield "good red wheat," or "gold," or "blighted cabbages." The workman *quâ* workman, labourer *quâ* labourer, if he is stupid, does not. Ability is quick to see, quick to experiment, quick to devise; is swift-thoughted, far-seeing, divining. Labour *quâ* labour is not.

Ability coming along, says to the Socialist's *wise* and *patient* workman: Plant no more cabbages in this sandy bed; look at your nettles; come a little farther, and carry the gold which I will find, and you shall wash out. Now follow me swiftly, not patiently lagging,

[1] Bernard Shaw, "Fabian Essays." [2] "Economics."

but impatiently, flashingly, as I, over these shingles to the rich loamy fields I wot of; they should, by my calculations, lie there; carry these finest grains I have chosen, and I will teach you when and where to plant them. Gather these stones, pile them high, and push in between some fine soft earth with tufts of weeds and grass, that so clinging and growing they hold compactly together, and form a firm *enclosure* so that no preying beast nor robber may carry off the long-stalked, full-eared, crop. Drive in this beast and that, the finest in all the points I have noted, which I will show you; build up this shelter, and feed and tend, and cover in the fold that the rain may wash nothing away (you should have thought of this, O Labour!); and now carry out all that lies there, and place it on those *enclosed* lands, and the golden wheat will spring ever higher and fuller. Now build this strong house, it is here in my mind's eye (not in the mud and straw your hands pile up)—walls and towers of quarried stone, and barred doors, that none may come to kill us here and drive off the fatted kine.

And the wise and patient workman does as he is bid, and wonders, if the soul in him has yet grown big enough to wonder. If it has, he runs and leaps and toils and thinks and observes, until at last Ability is born and reared and nurtured in him, and he springs forth to do like him who taught him, and to find other patient workmen to toil for him, to learn of him, perchance to bring forth Ability also in their turn. Thus has agriculture grown. The able, "the kenner," "the cunning," "the king," as Carlyle puts it.

There came a time (not so very many years ago) when prosperity with improved methods "increased by leaps and bounds." Ability had been at work. Those

who owned the land unceasingly put back into the soil the value they received from it. The earth was fed and fenced; walls, houses, offices, steadings were built as they had never been built before, and in these bounding times of prosperity it was found that nearly all the inbringings of the soil were needed to furnish forth such houses, fences, steadings, walls, and drainage as were needful to the improved husbandry, the "high farming," and to keep pace with the demands of the hungry earth and the now more capable farmers.

This was particularly perhaps the case in Scotland, which had in bygone times been behind her southern neighbour, and where the greatest efforts were made, with the greatest success, to bring her agriculture up to the foremost rank, which, in spite of the greatest disadvantages of climate, and often of soil, was achieved. As each nineteen years' lease fell in, larger and larger sums were laid out. Thousands were frequently spent upon farms returning a rent of a few hundreds. The entire rental of many properties was often spent upon the land.[1]

In addition to the buildings and permanent improvements the landlord drained the land himself, it being too costly and important a business to leave to the farmer, who might have been tempted to do it in an inexpensive and less efficient manner.

Naturally rents went up, larger returns came in to the farmer, with better crops and cattle, and England strove to hold her own against the vast supplies of produce of every description which the virgin soils and sunny skies of more favoured climates were pouring in upon us.

[1] Notably by the late Duke of Sutherland in Sutherlandshire, and on the estates of the late Sir Alexander Matheson of Ardross, in Ross-shire.

Stupendous efforts were made to keep the ship straight in the storm of foreign competition, which beat ever fiercely and more fierce. But while trying to weather the storm and keep the land in cultivation, a howl was got up by those with Socialistic proclivities against landlords, rates were raised, burdens put on the land it was utterly incapable of bearing, wages and taxes went up, rents went down, till at last in some places no rent could be paid and no farmer could live. Then the worst land went out of cultivation. Whole tracts in Norfolk and other counties were offered for nothing to any one who would farm them, but no one would take the trouble to do so; farmers knew it would not pay them to engage labourers at the then rate of wages to clear the weeds. So the houses and steadings had no more money laid out upon them and got out of condition, and many landlords shut up their houses or sold them and their lands, and tried to live on the little that remained to them in towns or abroad.

The money they had put into the land they never got out. It is that which Socialists are clamouring for now; and they are clamouring for such cultivation of the soil as shall enable England to feed her own people.

We read in "Merrie England," . . . "If we used all our available land, we could feed 300,000,000 of people . . ." And: . . . "We shall soon get silenced the croakers who talk about the impossibility of the country feeding her people . . ." And: "Depend upon it what I have told you is true, and that England can feed her people as she has fed them in times gone by. . . ."

Further, "Nunquam" says, . . . "Do not believe that any nation can sell corn more cheaply than we

could produce it. I am sure that if it cost little more to grow our corn than to buy it, yet it would be to our interest to grow it."

A great many of us were of opinion long ago that it was a pity to allow our agriculture to be swamped with supplies of foreign produce, and a great mistake to burden the land so heavily that it stood no chance in competition with the rivals who have the advantages of cheap labour and favourable climate; but the clamour for a "free breakfast-table" and the cheap loaf was great; the Social democrat had his way, till at last Free Trade, with simultaneously increasing rates and wages, made it clear that corn could not be grown at the price. Hops are in the same position now, and those who clamoured against the landlord till foreign supplies killed our wheat-growing, and almost killed our agriculture altogether, now tell us that England could again feed her people as in times gone by, although they fail to show how or to give any proofs that it can be done, or that we can grow wheat, hops, and other produce, and rear cattle at the same price as other countries.

"Nunquam's" calculations would be useful if they showed us how the quantity of food required to feed the whole nation could be grown, how the rates, taxes, and larger wage-bill could be paid—for the labourers are promised a much larger share of the produce—how the land could be kept drained and fenced and a surplus brought out, if not for the nation as rent yet for the remuneration of the officials of the agricultural, arboricultural, and other departments after the nationalisation of the land, and for the managers of the huge business, also for building and keeping up buildings without adding such a price to the loaf and to beef as no man, while he can get foreign supplies, would like

to pay. I speak only of the State *versus* the proprietor, because the Socialist does not mean to adopt any known system of tenure, either that of peasant proprietor or any other, but intends to nationalise the land—*i.e.* make the State the sole proprietor.

It would be instructive to hear how, if the Socialist took all the land over to-morrow without paying for anything more than the buildings and unexhausted improvements, he could work it remuneratively if he paid only the interest of the debt and carried out his promises to the labourer while foreign produce continued to pour in. "Nunquam's" assertions that England can feed her people, and that it would be to our interest to pay more for our corn and grow it ourselves (which, indeed, most of us said long ago) sounds curiously like a suggestion of Protection, which is rather inimical than consonant with the universal brotherhood preached by Socialists, and is indicative of the abolition of Free Trade in the Socialist future.

The Socialist, in common with most dwellers in towns, seems to have the erroneous notion that all the land which is not cultivated could be cultivated profitably. It is strange, bearing in mind "the greed of land-grabbers," that it should not have occurred to the users of these elegant epithets to wonder why such "greedy grabbers" have not "got hold of" some labourers and "compelled" them to cultivate (as they allege the rich do) and get produce and wealth out of every inch of available land they possess, instead of leaving thousands of acres fallow. That they have not done so might suggest, considering their alleged avaricious propensities, a doubt as to whether there were much land uncultivated which could be profitably put under crop.

It is easy enough (and it is what no one will contravene) to say there is a large acreage of the land of England uncultivated; but it is quite a different thing to say (although the intention is to imply that it is the same) that this acreage is unused, or that it could be turned to better account than it is now. Many to whom these statements are presented seem to believe that they are synonymous, and indeed it is difficult to see for what purpose they are made if it is not meant that they are.

It evidently occurs to neither teachers nor disciples that the large tracts of uncultivated land consist, for the greater part, of uncultivable or unprofitable soil, such as would not repay clearing and cultivation; that a large portion of it (indeed nearly all that is grazable) is grazed; that another large portion of it is under timber, or lying fallow (after the timber crop has been taken off) for planting, and that the rest consists of rock, swamp, and bog, partly heather grown, partly bare, where game and deer only can subsist. Those to whom the land belongs, who have a permanent interest in it, know from their long experience of it how to combine the different undertakings for which the different capabilities of soil, climate, and situation are fit, as no mere agriculturist, or supplier of food, can.

Nor is it seen in any country in the world where private property in land does not extensively exist, that high farming and fine timber crops consist with the rich woodland and hedgerows, which make the whole countryside beautiful in England. On the Continent and abroad generally, you may travel for whole days together through vast tracts of cultivated land destitute of woodland and hedgerows, or ornamental trees of any sort, whereby beauty is lacking, and drought,

or a deficiency of moisture, proves detrimental to the crops and to the country generally.

In Italy, where the metayer system prevails (under which the peasant cultivator takes half the produce), and in other countries where peasant proprietorship principally exists, there is in agricultural districts an utter absence of timber of any sort. Those who have to take as much food out of a given area as it will yield dare not leave any patch in the shade, nor can they spare the space which even the roots of one tree take, nor afford to have the land drained of nourishment by the adjacent trees; nor, when it is necessary to get the largest quantity of food possible out of the land, will any one, whether individual or State, set aside land or money for planting.

The Socialist, the Democrat, the Landleaguer (really all one and the same) show themselves alike equally destitute of any practical knowledge of land, and even of any imagination of the requirements for dealing with it.

It was from such Socialist sources that the proposition of "three acres and a cow" came, which died and got itself forgotten among the jeers of those to whom it was offered. "Three acres and a cow!" exclaimed the Highland shepherds (walking their twenty miles to the nearest railway station on their way to vote, after an eloquent orator had been telling the capital of the Highlands that every one ought to have three acres and a cow;) "he should offer it to those who know nothing about the acres nor the cow." These shepherds are generally the sons of the crofters, who till the only cultivable patches of soil in those parts, and who, having some practical knowledge of land, the landlord, and the farmer, sneered at the Socialistic proposition. They are

always supplied with milk and meal by the sheep-farmer in whose employ they are, and having experience of the risk, trouble, and expense of a cow, even with three acres, and knowing the value of having pure milk and unadulterated meal supplied on the spot as part of their wages, without responsibility and uncertainty, refused mockingly the offered cow and acres.

They thus escaped being misled, as were the crofters by the Landleaguers, concerning their tenancies, who, when the Crofter Commission had lowered their rents, and consequently cut off the counterbalancing advantages accruing from having an individual landlord, began to see that their alleged grievances against private property had not been so great as they had been led to believe, and many of them would have been glad, had it been possible, to retrace their steps and again place themselves in the hands of the landlord. Private property did not seem so heinous after their new experience of fixity of tenure as before. The Crofter Commission was one of those clever inventions for the apportioning of interests of which the separate consideration can only lead to error and to the diminishment of national prosperity. The favourable adjudication of the State, or of a particular set of men, do not, as a rule, indemnify for advantages which accrue to the individual to be benefited from a system under which various interests are dovetailed into each other by one person interested in the whole; nor can these interests be beneficially adjusted by those who, having no practical intimate connection with them, do not comprehend, or are not interested in, all the bearings of the question.

The "three acres and a cow" has a double significance in connection with this subject of private property in land, as showing how little is known of the

landowners and occupiers by those advocating radical changes, and proving how incompetent they are to deal with complicated matters of this sort. For this handsome proposal was made by very able men, who were supposed to have made themselves acquainted with the subject on which they advocated legislation, and who urged it on people who were supposed to stand sorely in need of what was offered, but who were in reality much too well off to do anything but jeer at the offer, thus indicating that they were receiving from their employers under the present land system more than what was offered by those who were coming to their unneeded relief with this Socialistic remedy, although their way of living was such as to induce the public and men of affairs to believe that they required help, and would be thankful for, and particularly joyful at, this particular kind of help. The great mistakes here made in connection with property were in supposing that an injurious system was oppressing a Class and necessitating this measure; and in imagining that this re-arrangement of land and property would meet the case. It is important to note not only the two mistakes, but to observe the quality they have in common with Socialism; for although Socialists do not propose to intrust the land to individuals, but to keep it wholly in the hands of the State, the views which prompted the proposal of "three acres and a cow" and set the Crofter Commission afoot were entirely Socialistic in character, as was also the train of thought and feeling which led to them.

The error was threefold, for the postulate was not that there were individual grievances or abuses, not that there were several diverse causes at work, but that the land system was at the bottom of all the

evils; that the State, in the persons of its ablest and (on this subject) most instructed individuals had sufficient knowledge (informed as they were by the leaders of the supposed injured classes and the Socialist agitators) to redress it, and that the course they took would achieve the object in view.

Those to whom these statesmen offered their remedy, although uneducated and poor, had sufficient experience to enable them to be alive to the one important fact (which the arraigners of the landlord were ignorant of) that it would not pay, and that they were better off, nay, very well off as they were; and many of those who lauded the Crofter Commission and its decisions now proclaim it a failure. All this is significant in connection with the fact that those who now propose to nationalise the land are in the same position as regards practical experience of its management as the statesmen and agitators who thought the "three acres and a cow" would be profitable to those they proposed to benefit.

Socialists intend to nationalise the land in order, they say, to benefit humanity, and they know just as little (in fact, probably much less) about either the land or its management, or what would result to the nation from its transfer, as the proposer to the Highlander of the "three acres and a cow."

Ordinary individuals and statesmen, as a rule, are to a certain extent (to a greater or less extent according to their intellectual calibre) alive to their own comparative incapacity in such respects as lie outside their special province, and they enter the field with experts and men of practical proficiency with hesitation and modesty in matters of which they have but little knowledge. The tradesman, the lawyer, the author, the soldier

will hesitate before they make farming their occupation, and stake their all upon it, partly, perhaps, because it must be their own property they risk, and not some one else's. An ordinary man, who had never farmed, would certainly not think of taking a large farm, and engaging experts to manage it, if the experiment had to be made out of his own money, and if the existence of himself and family depended upon the result. It is doubtful if even he would venture to do it out of other people's money. And he certainly would not undertake to manage an estate if he had only a knowledge of farming. Yet the Socialist does not hesitate to undertake to farm and manage the whole of the estates of Great Britain without any of the various sorts of knowledge which are necessary to the successful management of a single estate, and all of which ought to be united in the same person.

When it is affirmed that the State could be as successful a farmer and estate manager as it is a distributor—*e.g.* in the postal and telegraph business, or in the business of transport—*e.g.* railways, or even as a producer of soldiers' clothing and appliances for naval and military undertakings, some facts are ignored which are inherent parts of the matter. Moreover, it is at the least very questionable whether the State does these things better and more successfully than the individual; indeed the contrary is held to have been proved by Mr. Herbert Spencer; but if it did, these are all matters of a simple nature, not complicated with manifold various undertakings.

It might not be very hazardous to stake a fortune on the assertion that not one of those who talk of forming the Socialist State, and are making all arrangements for its working, and are planning to overturn civilisation

in order to do so, could pass any examination in any one of the subjects in connection with the land they are trying to get possession of, nor state the A, B, C of any of the undertakings involved in the management which they are sedulously endeavouring to get into their hands. They would probably not be able to state to any examiner what subjects it was necessary to be conversant with for the control of any one business, or for the management of even one estate. Yet they unshrinkingly propose to manage every business and every estate, and to deal profitably with the land of the whole kingdom.

It would be interesting to place these general undertakers together with the same number of landlords before a body of examiners and publish the result of the examination. As large a stake might almost as certainly be won on this as on the results of a military examination if these same agitators went up to pass for a colonelcy.

It might be thought that perhaps a consciousness of this ignorance of land and its management was partly the reason why the Socialist wished to appropriate the land of Great Britain (which is all under its present owners in fine working order) together with the power to compel the present landowners to labour, rather than acquire other and more naturally productive land without trouble and for nothing elsewhere, were it not that the wealth that individuals have put into privately possessed land (without which it would have no more value than the prairie, except that it is in the centre of civilisation) makes it vastly more desirable.

And were the Socialist conscious of the ignorance and deficiency he would exhibit beside the landlord before an examiner in the presence of the working-man,

he would be less loud in his denunciation of the owners of private property, and less anxious to proclaim his anxiety to turn wholesale farmer and estate manager.

It may be retorted that the landlord employs managers. He does, but he understands the different matters in which they are experienced and for which he employs them; otherwise, as it sometimes happens, they become rich and he becomes poor; nor is any proprietor so prosperous, nor are his tenants so contented, as when he manages his own estates. Moreover, there is the wide difference, that if he makes mistakes, the loss is circumscribed and partial (he himself being the greatest sufferer) and does not involve national disaster.

Mistakes and inaptitude are also alleged against statesmen; but no statesman has the absolute control of all the land and wealth of any country, but only of such portion of taxation as taxpayers place in their hands from time to time. If their mistakes are serious, they are far more easily remedied or put a stop to than they would be if there were no sort of property which was safe from them, and no owners of it to stand up and strive for rectification. Nowhere is any man nor any body of men invested with such unlimited power and illimitable wealth as Socialists propose to invest themselves with, and never has dispossession and acquisition been carried into effect on such a scale as that which Socialists intend.

Property and person are to be absolutely (by the Socialist programme) at the disposal of the Socialist. This absolute power over wealth and person throughout the Empire is the Socialist's alternative to private property and to individual possession of earnings and the results of bequest and inheritance.

The Socialist, notwithstanding his distinct deficiency

of knowledge in all that concerns the treatment and management of land, is evidently acutely aware (while denouncing enclosures and civilisation) of the comparatively trifling value of unenclosed lands far from civilisation; he shows no taste for territories in the neighbourhood of Maories and Red Indians, or even of those who hold similar doctrines to his own; those who put his doctrines voluntarily into practice have no attraction for him, as one might naturally think they would have; he very wisely prefers land already in working order, enriched with all the appliances that appertain to high cultivation (as supplied by civilisation and private property) to land destitute of everything, on which no money has ever been laid out, and requiring a large outlay before it would yield any return whatever. This of course is very acute, and shows he has a good eye for business. And his plan for seizing with the land the power to compel people to labour, would give him command of all those owning, managing, and understanding the land and its requirements at present, and would place their experience and knowledge at his service; if they do not give him the benefit of their powers at home, they will be compelled, he tells us, to do so in "a penal colony."

Thus the Socialist State will have many advantages in connection with the land which individual ownership has never had. Although the Socialist denies that the value of land has arisen in any way from individual possession, and that landowners are anything but thieves, he thus in practice shows that he is perfectly aware that this is not true, for he does not desire any land which is not in possession already, nor does he think it worth while to acquire any, however easily it may be had, to which individual

possession has not given value—such value as the land, however valuable, cannot have in itself. Socialists attribute, it is true, this value to another factor; but this other factor, labour, they have at their command; and as they are only anxious that the products of labour should belong to labour, there can be no reason why they should not at once avail themselves of the land which is at their disposal. Vast tracts of the richest soil in the world, with vast mineral resources, lie unappropriated within a few days' journey of these shores; why should they wait, if to relieve suffering and want is their object? why prefer all the trouble, suffering, and risk, of revolution? or even all the delay necessary to constitutional agitation? The Socialist tells those whom he could thus immediately relieve and enrich that all the land is appropriated, but any one who thinks of Canada, South Africa, and Australia (all having unsurpassable climates) perceives this to be totally untrue.

Mr. Bernard Shaw says: "At this point there appears on the land a man in a strange plight—one who wanders from snow-line to sea-coast in search of land, and finds none that is not the property of some one else. Private Property had forgotten this man. On the roads he is a vagrant: off them he is a trespasser: he is the first disinherited son of Adam, the first Proletarian."[1]

This may be very fine writing and a spirit-moving statement, melting those who believe it to compassion and indignation, but it is not true, as indeed in another place Mr. Bernard Shaw stultifies himself by admitting, for he says on p. 25, "Nor is it true that . . . cultivation has yet spread from the snow-line to the water's

[1] "Fabian Essays," p. 9.

edge." A great many of us possess no land, and we are not vagrants nor trespassers. Surely Mr. Bernard Shaw is not in the possession of land, and he presumably is not a vagrant nor a trespasser.

Do any of us who have no land talk sentimental twaddle about "private property having forgotten" us, because we have not earned enough money to buy land in *England*, or because no one has bequeathed us any? And it is not in any sense true that all the land from snow-line to coast is the property of some one else; there is far more than the acreage of Great Britain unappropriated in Canada alone, which can be had on the sole condition of its being put under crop and the necessary buildings being put on it. All the Socialist has to do is to treat this land as the proprietors in possession have treated theirs—enclose it, drain it, put buildings and stock on it, and it may be his for himself, for his party, for the people, for humanity. But he is not willing to do what the owners of land have done; he does not want any land which has not had everything it requires done for it by others and with their money; he refuses all other.

When the land of England which is now possessed came into the hands of its present owners, it was not in the state in which it now is; and it was not in the centre of civilisation, but very far from it; those who settled upon it and who have bequeathed or sold it, were practically farther from their own homes than we are from Canada; they were here in the centre of what they considered, and what comparatively was, barbarism. The soil was swampy, the air was foggy and damp, and savage beasts roamed through the length and breadth of the land.

It was even practically a longer and more difficult

journey centuries later from the south to the north of the kingdom than it is from here to Canada now. Mr. Bernard Shaw's match-girl could go more easily and safely from here to Australia now than she could have gone to Northumberland then; and the climate of any of our colonies would be infinitely pleasanter and more suitable for her, nor would she have to rough it as much as the ancestors of those who own the land now had to rough it when they acquired it. Those travelling to the north in the time of the Conqueror, and for centuries later, did not find themselves among friends, their own kith and kin, nor among any speaking their own language. The match-girl (cleverly remarks Mr. Bernard Shaw) cannot go to Canada because it is so far off, and so cold there, and—if we understand him aright—because she cannot speak the language! "There is free land still for the poorest East-End match-box maker, if she could get there, reclaim the wilderness there, speak the language there, stand the climate there, and be fed and clothed and housed there, while she cleared her farm, learned how to cultivate it, and waited for her harvest."[1] Precisely the same might be said if you presented her with the finest estate in England. The climate clause would, of course, have to be struck out, but we have not yet heard that the climate of the colonies is not fit for the women of the English race. And as regards the "language," it is puzzling to know in what colony the language is not the same as in England.

It is true Mr. Bernard Shaw does not say that he means the Colonies, but when he is speaking of a match-box maker, why should he hit upon China or Russia and ignore the Colonies as if they did not exist? Is it to

[1] Bernard Shaw, "Economics."

convince those in need that there are no Colonies for them? or has he forgotten that there are any?

He says, "She cannot reclaim the wilderness there." No, she cannot, and she cannot do it at home, nor can any of us do what we have not learned to do; and she cannot manage a farm here, where she can stand the climate and speak the language, no more than she could if you gave her all the land of England to-morrow without any of the money others have earned and the necessary appertainments which that money has procured. It is curious that this should have escaped the notice of such a very clever man as Mr. Bernard Shaw; but the Socialist, or the Socialist State, can as well farm the land in Canada as in England, and can appropriate it more easily, and cultivate it far less expensively, if the cost merely of revolution here, and of the implements and buildings (if they are to be paid for) is considered, without counting the cost of the land which it is intended to confiscate.

Why, then, does the Socialist not do it? Because he does not want to put his own money into the land, as the landlord has done, and as all others becoming owners of land in Canada and elsewhere are constantly doing; and because land is no use to any one until some one does put money into it, and put it in too with ability, with something more than mere labour—with a knowledge of how to get it out again, which is as essential as the knowledge of how to put it in, which ability and knowledge it would seem the Socialist must lack, or there would not be so much land going begging as there is in all parts of our Colonial world.

Thus it is clear when the Socialist denounces private property in land, it is not free access to the land that he wants; it is the wealth that has been put into it

and on it that he desires; it is this he is craving for. He wants not only the land, but the manures, the drains, the buildings; he wants the fences, the implements, the machinery, the stock; and he wants the money to pay the labourers, the rates and taxes, and the repairs; he wants to be fed and clothed "till he reaps his harvest" (for we suppose this is as necessary to him as to the match-girl, although the match-girl does make a greater appeal to the feelings of the compassionate); he also wants, in case there should be losses by fire, storm, flood, disease, or death, money to indemnify him; in fact, he wants done by somebody else for him all that the individual possessor of land does for himself, and he wants to confiscate and take possession of the land for which the owners have done all that he is unwilling to do.

And when he has confiscated the land and all the personal property in it and on it, he will not, we venture to think, consider that any Humanity from anywhere has any right to expropriate him.

His doctrines concerning land tenure will then be somewhat changed. The Socialist is, no doubt, "the wise and patient workman" Mr. Bernard Shaw speaks of, who "with heavy toil" strikes his spade in, never knowing whether the land contains diamonds or cabbages.[1]

We have here an excellent indication of the Socialist's knowledge of land, but his ignorance would not be of so much consequence if the whole of his system did not turn entirely upon land. He has evidently no glimmering of an idea that the patient workman, if he knows anything of his business, or if he is wise, or not utterly incapable, does (whether he be labourer

[1] Bernard Shaw, "Economics," p. 4.

or farmer, or even a much despised landlord) know exactly when he puts his spade in, if not before, at least with the very first shovelful of earth he turns up, what he is likely to get out of that particular spot and exactly what is the value of that land; and that he will get nothing out of it if he does not first put a good deal in; and that if what he turns up happens to be that yellow sand whereon the "idle spendthrift picks up gold," that he will get nothing out of it in the way of cabbages or food, whatever he may put in. In fact, he knows all that without putting in his spade at all. He does not, as Mr. Bernard Shaw imagines, go on digging for corn while some one else on the same spot picks up nuggets.

Neither the wise workman, nor any even unwise workman, expects to get cabbages or food of any sort out of a gold stream, nor gold out of a cabbage-bed, nor is he at all uncertain what he will get out of the soil on which he sets his foot when once he looks at it. There is no "stepmother" in the question nor capricious power hiding the treasure: "All the forethought and industry of man are set at naught by the caprice of the power which hid the treasure."[1] This may be Socialist learning and wisdom, but it is what other men, even rustics, would call rank ignorance and stupidity. Is there any townsman who (never having been beyond the precincts of his native city) is so ignorant and so stupid that when he for the first time plants his foot on the sandy bank of a river, or on the rock beneath the heather, or on the moss-covered bog where the rushes spring and wherein he sinks, does not know that he will get no cabbages or potatoes, or any other food, there for all his digging and toiling? And when he throws himself

[1] Bernard Shaw, "Economics," p. 4.

down on a rich flowery meadow, does flower-growing or diamond-seeking appear to him the most suitable and profitable occupation? Will he feel himself "mocked" by some unseen power, and think his industry and *forethought* forsooth (!) "are set at naught" if he puts in his spade among the flowers expecting to find diamonds, and no one comes to tell him there are no diamonds among the cowslips, or if people laugh at him and call him a fool for his pains? Are there any men anywhere so brainless as this except in idiot asylums? Yet it is a fact that all this fine sentimental writing does find admirers and acceptance. They do not look for sense; they are caught by the sweet sentiment and the ability which dresses up error and unreality and makes them look like truth and fact.

There are the chances, of course, of weather, fire, flood, earthquakes, but so there are for the miner and the gold-digger. It is only the Socialist who thinks, or tries to make men think, that the "wise and patient workman" does not know these things and is "mocked by the earth," or that the earth "gives" her gold, her coal, or her petroleum, to her favourite the "spendthrift," or that the "wise and patient workman" becomes a gambler. That is exactly what the wise workman does not do; if he is only wise, or only patient, he never becomes a gambler.

Where the Socialist's "wise and patient workman" discovers nothing but nettles, "the foolish spendthrift on the other side of the hedge, gazing idly on the glittering in the sun, suddenly realises that the earth is offering him gold,"[1] we are told.

This is all very clever and very logical. Some capricious power shows the gold to the idler and

[1] Bernard Shaw, "Economics."

hides it from the workman close beside him! Is this true, or is it false? Does the spendthrift find gold at his feet? Does the earth "offer" it to *him* in particular, "*press* it upon him," make it dance before his eyes, lest it should escape him, while *hiding* it from the man beside him? Did any one ever yet hear of such a thing? This is the sort of economic truth Socialism offers us as science!

"Another man, searching for gold, comes upon a great hoard of coal."[1] Is it true that any man ever finds coal on the spot on which he finds gold? And does the man finding the nettles close to the gold that the idle man listlessly picks up on the other side of the hedge, go on digging without ever seeing the gold? Is this true, or is it false?

The Socialist's knowledge of agriculture, mining, and of things generally, seems curiously scanty, as scanty as his knowledge of "wise and patient workmen" and of "foolish spendthrifts;" he seems quite unaware that the wise workman knows what he is about, and does not look for gold in coal-mines, nor for coal in sandy rivers; that he does not "strike his spade in" to "discover" potatoes and barley; he knows exactly what sort of potatoes he will get out before he plants them, and that nettles will certainly grow if he does not constantly clear them away; and that if the spendthrift close by picks up gold, he can pick it up too. Yet this is the Science and Political Economy of Socialism; this it is upon which they found their attack on property and their accusations concerning it!

Cabbages and potatoes, and all the other results of agriculture, according to this doctrine, are just found in the ground like coal or gold; no one ever spends

[1] Bernard Shaw, "Economics."

money in putting them in, nor does any one ever know what sort of cabbages and potatoes are coming out! Gold is just picked up beside the cabbages, not by the digger, however; it "offers" itself only to the spendthrift. This sort of Political Economy may do well enough for the ignorant, or for the town labourer, who never thinks about cabbages, but knows that some people have a good deal of gold, that the man who digs is poor, and the man who has his pockets full of gold is rich.

Therefore he may be led to believe that Socialism is right in trying to intercept the good things which so perversely offer themselves to those who never look for them, in order to distribute them among those who labour futilely. "Men come greatly to desire that these capricious gifts of Nature might be intercepted by some agency having the power and the goodwill to distribute them justly according to the labour done by each in the collective search for them. This desire is Socialism."[1] Thus ability, energy, courage, perseverance, are merely the spirit of gambling; ignorance and stupidity are patient merit; incapability is synonymous with wisdom, and property with the gambler's winnings. These teachings exemplify the whole theory of the Socialist concerning property and the production and distribution of wealth. These few sentences will be found to contain the pith of the whole Socialist gospel.

There are untold riches locked up in vast untrodden tracts for those who have the ability and energy to find and bring them forth, for the "wise and patient," who alone find them; but those are not wise, who grow cabbages in sand, are not those who have the ability,

[1] Bernard Shaw, "Economics."

endurance, and energy which enable men to go to the right spot and force out the sort of wealth they set themselves to find, and who are willing first, if need be, to pour in their own wealth.

Practical men know that those who have not served a long apprenticeship to the practical treatment of land might as well pour their wealth into a well as into land; and we see practically the same reluctance in the Socialist, which is remarkable. Socialists have wealth at their command, untold, fabulous wealth, since "labour is the only source of wealth," and they can practically have illimitable land—is it, then, ability they lack? Land and labour at command, and yet no wealth! Strange!

The truth is, that if some of the millions of working-men the Socialist has taken so much pains many winters to throw out of work had been (by means of the money which public generosity supplies for their maintenance, and which trades unions spend in strikes) placed on the land a few days' journey off, and which is far richer than anything which can be had at home, Socialists could not even have set them to work, nor could they have profitably employed themselves. Why? Because labour is not "the only source of wealth," nor even land and labour; and because Socialists cannot get on without all that ability that the owners of land have supplied to the land in possession; therefore they will not hear of the Colonies, but aim at appropriating and farming the land of Great Britain.

The Socialist has given proof that he can bring out 500,000 men on strike, and maintain them for months while they are unemployed, but he gives no proof that he is able to employ them, although millions of acres of wheat-growing land are lying fallow. It must

never be forgotten that "labour is the only source of wealth." There is the labour for months unemployed; there is the money which for months maintained the unemployed; there is the assistance ready for those desiring to emigrate; there is the land which may be had for the asking on the sole condition that it should be properly cultivated; there is the chance for the Socialist to prove (not indeed that "labour is the only source of wealth") that land, and money, and ability combined are the sources of wealth, and that he knows better how to manage the resources of a country, and is more capable of producing wealth, and happiness, and comfort therefrom, than the owner of land at home. He has never seized that chance, has never shown any disposition to do so.

But although he tries to convince us with many sophistical words that the wealth of the owner of land arises solely from labour, he himself wants a good deal more than labour combined with land to produce even a small measure of food; he wants even more money than he has at command for strikes; he wants the transference of wealth which has been placed on the land by others; he wants this transferred from the Non-Socialist pocket to his own. He refuses to confer the boon of his alleged superiority in agriculture on his adherents until he can appropriate the whole of this particular kingdom, together with all the wealth that has arisen from the skill, the energy, and the wealth of others. Not till then will he turn agriculturist and show us how much better he can do than those now in possession.

He certainly will not care for "rotten old oaks;" he gives us fair warning beforehand that they are all to go, these gnarled oaks, bent and twisted with age, which,

thanks to those hated Dukes and others like them, still stand to shade and delight us, speaking as it were of the past, of the times when, centuries ago, those who loved those trees as we love them, laughed and danced, or sorrowed and wept, beneath their branches. The "landlord" has cherished them, spent time and money in guarding them; the agriculturist, *qua* mere agriculturist, necessarily dislikes them; trees are in his way, particularly old trees, with far-spreading roots and branches; it is not his business to look after beauty of any sort, nor to look after any sort of crop but that which he is paid to reap. His business is to clear away everything which impedes his plough.

But if "England is to feed her people," if trees are not to be improved off the face of the land, if England is to be merrie and green, even only as green as it is now, if the "dismal hell-holes" and overgrown towns are to be abolished, as the Socialist promises, he will have to do what his soul abhors—to fence carefully, and rigidly enclose all lands planted and farmed, and do also what he now denounces: keep the public sternly out on the highroad.

It is difficult for the Non-Socialist to see how all this increased greenery and agriculture will consist with the increased machinery which is promised, and the ever-increasing population housed, according to promise, in the fresh air instead of in towns, and requiring vastly increased transport. Socialist ability has not yet divulged the secret of how all this is to be done. At present the only persons striving to do some portion of it, doing something towards the preservation of the beauty and greenery of England, planting trees and guarding them, and transmitting increased woodland and timber to posterity, are the "landlords;" the only persons

resisting the demand for indiscriminate powers to cover the country with buildings, and the disfiguring operations connected with machinery and industrial pursuits, are the landlords; they alone combine the conflicting interests of arboriculturists and agriculturists with the general development of the country.

The Socialist could show that he is equally capable of using the land and labour at his disposal, since totally unspoilt land and beauty is but a few days' journey distant. But he does not seem inclined to try his 'prentice han', if he has to put it first into his own 'prentice pocket; he waits till he can put his hand into his neighbour's till.

But the landowner (by the Socialist's own account, when he says that England could feed her people) is not a man who is set upon taking as much money out of every inch of land as it will yield; he is not merely an agriculturist, nor a mere timber-grower. One part of his domain is as important to him as another, and he has a knowledge of the treatment the different parts require; he is anxious for the prosperity of the whole, not for his own sake merely, but also for the sake of those who come after him, and for whom, as a rule, he sacrifices, if need be, his own profit. He has to hold the scales evenly between the agriculturist and the sheep farmer, the sportsman, the forester, the small tenant, the large tenant; he tends and cherishes the beauty which it is his continual effort to increase, and he props and protects his "rotten old oaks," not because he likes, as is alleged, to see them rot, but because he thinks them beautiful, and because they have sheltered those who have gone before, who have handed them down to him to care for and hand on; his endeavour generally is to leave his inherit-

ance not merely as he received it, but in an improved state.

If he receives a return for what he puts into his arable land, he scarcely receives any for what he plants, for the wealth he puts into it in planting and tending the young growth and the timber and woodland generally.

The Socialist, as he takes pains to make clear to us, would have cut down these trees long before they got "rotten," while no money will tempt the lord of many acres to sell what will yet be a joy to the generations who come after. Many a man whom the Socialist thinks is a luxurious liver, while preserving appearances, lives a life of the greatest economy, so far as his personal wants are concerned, and would endure privation rather than cut down one ancestral oak.

The Socialist sees these old oaks, and thinks they ought to have been turned to use long ago, and that so much money is lost because they are "rotting." A walk in Windsor Great Park will not delight him, nor recall the past to his mind with its Falstaff and its Puck and its Midsummer Nights. And when he travels and sees the hillsides marked with fences, and ingress strictly forbidden, his unaccustomed eye glancing over them descries no trees, or only such as he concludes have grown naturally and would continue to grow naturally were there no fences, and it does not occur to him that this is a valuable and costly young planting, but complains that people are not allowed to go everywhere and trample down everything. He is ignorant of the sum that is put into every acre that is enclosed, which no living man will ever see come out, and he bullies his Member till he prates of the iniquity of keeping the public off the hills and out of these game-preserves.

The ordinary unenvious lover of nature, wandering throughout the length and breadth of our islands, sees as much of the country without going over such hills and into such enclosures as he would see if he did. But the shocking fact remains that all that the landlord does for the land is for himself and for his own.

It is sad to think how very little comparatively that is done in this world is not done for ourselves, for our own, or from some interested motive. The most disinterested Socialist would not make boots for other men if he did not get his living by making them; nor will all the compulsion Socialists mean to apply make men supply others with what they need unless they receive what they consider an adequate return. The world does not, and never will consist, as far as we can see, of philanthropists. Nor will the most disinterested Socialist propagandist take any of the trouble he is taking to achieve expropriation, if he is to hand over the land (when he gets it) or its produce to any one whom he does not choose to give it to, or if he is not to do exactly what he likes with it. People will only benefit (if benefit accrues) by a change of management, and no one but Socialists will benefit at all. The landowner not only benefits the people who are near to him, whether they agree with him about Socialism or any other policy, but he also confers on posterity and the country the beauty and order he has striven for.

And we do maintain that the Socialist has his own interests at heart and his own interests in view. We do know that he professes that his interests are the interests of humanity, but we also know that they are in reality only the interests of the Socialist party. And this Socialists themselves admit in the early avowal (and in

many other ways) that there must be an Aliens Bill. And we do admit that the owners of land, when they plant trees and make other improvements, do not make any professions about humanity; but we also maintain that they do believe that the interests of humanity are bound up in the maintenance of private property, which belief is also shared by many of us who have no property.

One great difference between the landowner and the Socialist is that the landowner does not talk about Humanity, the Socialist does; but it will not be known whether there is any other difference of an advantageous sort to the people till the Socialist has all the wealth of Non-Socialists in his hands.

And we aver the Socialist will (by his own acknowledgment) bar his door against Humanity and all those whom he does not choose to admit. And more than that the possessor of property cannot be accused of.

The Socialist says he will not let such Humanity as is not helpful to him come to his doors or land on his shores; he says he will not relieve those who starve and will not work. The landowner lets Humanity land on his shores and come to his doors, and he does relieve those who knock and who starve, whether they are idle or not, and he does not compel them to work, or cast them back into the sea or into a penal colony because they like being idle. Thus we have only to compare the ordinary actual practice of the ordinary landlord and the professions of the Socialist to judge of the advantages to *Humanity*.

And, as practice generally falls far short of profession, we do also affirm that the Socialist's practice, for obvious reasons, will fall far short of his promises and professions of service. For he protests that his

highest ambition is first so to extend agricultural operations that England shall feed her own people; to do this he will have to cut down a great many trees and clear nearly all the land that is at present under timber; there will be therefore fewer woodlands.

Next he will spread the whole of the increasing population over the country; a perfectly praiseworthy undertaking, only not possible to combine with increased agriculture and increased woodland and greenery.

Then he says he will increase machinery, consequently increase factories and coal and iron industries, and mining and smelting operations; this, of course, involves more cutting down of trees and more abolishment of greenery. That all these professions could not simultaneously be put into practice is evident, and it is also evident that a proportion of each is sufficient to ruin a great portion, if not the whole, of the present beauty of the country, and leave it bare and treeless.

The effort, however, to put these professions into practice would no doubt be made, although the Socialist has evidently no idea of what his promises involve. He says it is true that all the beauty and freshness that now is belongs to the lords of the soil and is locked up by them. Fortunately it does, or it is clear it would not be there; nor will it be long there when it ceases to belong to them, and to be locked up; and better it is it should belong to somebody and be there, than not be there at all.

By their own professed intentions and plans Socialists would, had they been able, have abolished long ago "the rotten old oaks," together with fences and enclosures, in order to make room for myriads of trampling feet, for increased machinery, factories, and other industrial buildings.

Moreover, all the beauty which has been preserved by private possession is not locked up, except to such an extent as is necessary for the maintenance of its productiveness and its beauty. On such conditions as ensure this all domains worth visiting are thrown open to the public at certain seasons. When the proposal to make England feed her people is put into practice, every acre on which there is an inch of soil or a blade of grass will have to be locked up.

At present the Socialist seems to think that millions of people can tramp and dine, and dance and lie about upon fields and in woods, and that grass for cattle and corn for food, and trees for shade will go on growing there all the same; he thinks that all such places, together with all parks and domains which private property has preserved, ought to be as free as the streets to every one at all times and without conditions. He seems ignorant that if they were they would be very much the same as the streets; dirty and brown and untidy, and not worth visiting, instead of fresh and green. He evidently imagines that the beauty of such domains is achieved and maintained without trouble, thought, or expense, and that they are in that state naturally. But they never were naturally in that state, nor would they remain in that state for a single year, were trouble and expense spared; and if attention and expense were not constant, there would soon be no paths to walk on, but only swamp, tangle, and brushwood; as it is, those who possess them are content to lay out money without any return for the mere beauty and order of the thing. The Socialist probably thinks that the beauty of any such place is as great after parties of excursionists have run through it as it was when they entered; he seems

to have no idea that multitudes of visitors and a constant passing of numberless feet make it impossible, even with great outlay, to maintain freshness and luxuriance of verdure. And this outlay on the part of the landowner for the sake of the beauty of the domain, and the desire he has that those who come after him may also maintain and guard the interests of the land which is to be handed down, was, doubtless, the motive which produced the law of entail. Entail has practically gone; individual proprietors have benefited, but much of the beauty of the country has gone with it; for since land came more freely into the market, much timber has been cut which could not have been cut under entail, and building has increased. This may be a boon in some respects, but it is not beauty.

Private possession thus does what no general State farmer, no overseers will ever do effectively; the landlord guards all the diverse interests which fall to his care; he is able to do this on the comparatively small space which his individual eye and mind cover; he can from his life-long experience reconcile the conflicting interests of agriculture, forestry, sport, mineral resources, beauty, order, profit, outlay, and economy. The man whose interest is bound up in doing this, who knows every inch of the ground he has walked over ever since his tiny foot strayed at his mother's side, is the man who generally will do his best, and in so doing will do what is best for the country at large. It is not best for the country and the people that beauty should be forgotten and only money returns be thought of. Nor will the struggle of farmers and foresters, builders, miners, and contractors, in their zeal each to serve the Socialist state well in his own department, nor

divers overseers, conduce to the holding of the balance better than it is now held. It will cost far more, and it will in all probability be far less effectively done, and be far less advantageous for the nation.[1] Judging by the proclaimed intention of Socialists concerning machinery, old oaks, agriculture, and other such matters, the country will not present a beautiful appearance by the time Socialism has tried its 'prentice han' upon it.

The plans of Socialists are indeed consonant with their avowed primary object, *i.e.*, to transfer the money from the pocket of one man to the pocket of another; but this is not found to be a very insoluble problem by the inhabitants of Dartmoor and similar places when they are at liberty to put their plans into execution. Yet it is more than probable that under Socialism the rent which is expected to fall into the pocket prepared for it will be waited for in vain, that the owners of the still empty pockets will wonder why what they have been waiting for is gone since its abstraction from the original owner's pocket. It would be interesting to hear the opinions of the abstractors (after they have ransacked

[1] "A democratic Government represents only that political party in a country which happens for the time to command the largest number of votes. As it will not be long in power unless its budgets are of a popular and cheerful kind, it would be very impolitic to spend, as great private landowners have done, vast sums in agricultural experiments which might not prove financially successful, or in improvements which could bear fruit only in a somewhat distant future. Yet unless this were done the land and agriculture of a nation would not prosper, but would rapidly deteriorate. Thus the agents of a modern democratic Government, or, in other words, of a party Government which represents merely an unstable political majority, cannot but have far too much interest in immediate returns, and far too little in the permanent amelioration of the soil, to make good land administrators."—Prof. Flint, "Socialism," p. 226.

the aforesaid pockets) concerning the minus returns, and the statements that landlords had grown fat upon the land which had cost them nothing.

There is no doubt, however, that the justice of confiscation, when it has the power, while leaving the people minus the rents they expect to get, will transfer to Socialists all the buildings, houses, steadings, offices, barns, fences, hedges, drainage, timber, unexhausted manures, everything, in short, which belongs to the present owners, and which their wealth has put on to and into the soil, the benefit of all which enormous sum of wealth they will get by confiscation, or by payment of whatever small sum they may choose to fix as so-called compensation. That is why they would rather wait till they can seize the lands of England than acquire the yet unappropriated virgin soils of the Colonies.

It would be interesting also to witness the proceedings when they are reaping their golden crops, and the "despot" from over the seas with his armed following, or, for the matter of that, a mob of Socialist Humanity, "the wolves, the wolves, you know," appear on the scene with "Confiscation is justice" and "All wealth is plunder" inscribed on their banners. It would be instructive to hear their opinions then, and satisfactory if, before their despoilers set them to labour, to the work of producing the necessaries of life, they were to write (and publish, of course, at their own expense) a few books on the subject; they would compare curiously with those they now present us with, and throw some further light on property generally, and on land in particular, especially if those for whom they had seized it and for whom they managed it were also to give us their account.

For it would make no difference to the argument to say that *e.g.* 5,000,000 owned the land and wealth instead of *e.g.* 5000 as formerly, and that therefore it was not individual possession; for a certain number of men (the population of the island) would be found in possession of that which (by the Socialist's own pronouncement) belonged to Humanity, and here would be Humanity knocking at the door and claiming their own, their own land and their own wealth without which the lucrative result for which they came would not have appeared.

The arguments of the Socialist on this occasion would be curious and instructive: they would materially help people in forming a judgment concerning private property on the one hand, and the rights of Humanity on the other.

If the Socialist could be forced now to this test—as he assuredly will be in the future if he should ever be able to carry out his scheme—an end would for ever be effectually put to his present arguments against private property in land.

CHAPTER VIII

PRIVATE PROPERTY (WEALTH—MARX)

As Socialism as a whole stands or falls by the truth or falsity of its idea of justice, and as does its practicability or its success in working on its views on human nature, so do its doctrines concerning private property, expropriation and appropriation, stand or fall by its theory: "Labour is the only source of wealth," its inference therefrom that "All wealth is plunder," and its postulate that this wealth belongs to the parties to whom Socialists devise it.

Wealth may be divided into two parts:—

(1.) That which is current and productive—*i.e.*, capital, which includes all wealth of whatever sort which is used in production.

(2.) That portion which is unproductive, being used either in consumption or enjoyment.

The doctrine of Socialists concerning all this wealth, whether productive or unproductive, whether capital or otherwise, is that when possessed by individuals it is "plunder," and this doctrine (upon which alone Socialism is constructed and can stand) stands or falls according to the truth or untruth of the theory of value propounded by Karl Marx—the theory which Marx called a theory of value, but which is in reality a theory of the cost of labour.

To the economics of Marx, then, all must go if they

wish to know whether Socialism is sound or rotten at the core. And in doing so, it must be borne in mind that if Marx is wrong, Socialism, with its accusations and claims, is a sham; and if Marx is right Socialism is right.

Not that Socialism could not carry out its objects without any adherence to the Marxian doctrines. But when once Marx is exposed Socialists must abandon the foundation they have hitherto built upon and, shifting their ground and throwing aside all arguments based on honesty, repudiate the notion they have so desperately striven to get accepted that their system is rooted in justice, and that it is on moral grounds they claim support for it and struggle to place it in the position the system they are fighting to subvert now holds.

What Marx did for Socialism was to maintain and try to prove that its claims were just, and that the labourer was, on moral grounds, to be helped to fight for the surplus value he was said to be robbed of.

It will scarcely be denied by any peruser of "Das Capital" that the unconcealed aim of Karl Marx was to secure for labour and the labourer (*quâ* labour and *quâ* labourer) all value, all price, all gain—in short, all and every emolument, howsoever and whencesoever derived, that now goes to others, or to anything other than labour.

Marx tried to attain his object in various ways. In view of the fact that labour received only a certain portion of the current wealth, and that the rest went into the pockets of those who were not labourers, the problem Marx had to solve was how to remove that surplus from those pockets and place it in the pockets of labour. He tried to attain his object in various

ways; but first by his discovery that there were different kinds of value—use-value, surplus-value, and exchange-value; and alleging that use-value (which term he sometimes treated as a noun, sometimes as an adjective, at times calling it a useful article, at other times the attribute of an article, *i.e.*, utility) was not value, and therefore might, and must, be abstracted (even although the article itself were abstracted with it) before any calculation of value could be made; in short, that utility was not to count as value at all.

Then he explained that there were two sorts of labour, viz., concrete and abstract; but that concrete labour, like use-value, was not to count as value, was, in fact, to be abstracted also in any calculation of value, and that the value of a commodity was to be reckoned entirely by the quantity of abstract labour embodied in it, measured by time quite irrespective of utility, Nature, or demand.

Now, it is clear that if Marx could have proved that the utility of an article did not count as a factor in value, and that the value of a commodity consisted entirely and merely of the labour embodied in it measured by time, he need not have sought any other means of proving that the capitalist stole all he possesses from the labourer.

Obviously he did not think he had proved it, nor that he could prove it, for he tried other expedients, one of which was that there were two prices due to labour for two costs, one of which costs was the cost of maintaining labour-power, and the other—well, the other was not a cost at all but an *expenditure* of labour, which expenditure was made in return for the wage which maintained the labourer.

Of course he saw that would not do, so his next

expedient was this: that the spinning or weaving transferred the value of the means of production, and therefore had to be paid for, and that "labour in the abstract and functioning adds a new value;" but he omitted to state what the new value accruing after and apart from the transference was. Clearly he felt this would not do either, that he could not get two prices here, his two items being merely one; so then he invented the crown of his edifice, viz., surplus-value.

It is extraordinary that he did not produce this at first, and spare himself the trouble of all his other futile efforts; for if this theory of surplus-value and surplus-labour were sound, it would have done all the work he tried to compass by his other theories, although not all he wanted; for it would only apply to industrial enterprise, and not to all that surplus-value which accrues to "merchants' capital" and "interest-bearing capital."

The theory of surplus-value, however, as far as it goes, is this: that a man has to labour six hours a day and no longer for the sustenance of himself and family; that all the time he works over and above that is stolen from him, because the capitalist only pays him for six hours, and *compels* him, when he gets him into his factory, to labour for twelve; in order, as it seems, to prove this, Marx invents what he wishes us to consider a fact—viz., that the capitalist does not get any surplus-value out of the product of the first six hours of labour *because* he cannot charge more than the cost of production, but that when he sells the product of the twelve hours' labour he does get surplus-value, because then he can charge more than the cost of production.

Here he rested content. It evidently did not occur to him that any one would ask why, if more than the

cost of production could be obtained in the one instance it could not be obtained in the other. It is strange that such a mighty logician did not see that his failures of proof were here threefold; for first he adduces no proof that the labour of a certain fixed number of hours is sufficient and necessary for the maintenance of the labourer and his family, and he takes no notice of the inconvenient fact that the labour-time sufficient for such maintenance varies in different places, times, and seasons, according to circumstances and a variety of factors. Secondly, he does not prove that the capitalist only pays the labourer for six hours, nor show how he compels him to work during time he is not paid to work. Thirdly, he does not show why the capitalist cannot charge more than the cost of production in any and every instance, seeing that in one particular instance he does actually obtain more.

Further, Marx forgot to state why, seeing that the capitalist was at the mercy of the labourer for all his surplus-value, the labourer did not dictate his own terms and give only one hour instead of six for nothing, which the capitalist must have accepted, since he could get no surplus-value at all without it.

Even, however, had Marx proved all that was necessary in these respects, his theory of surplus-valve would not have applied to any other than industrial pursuits, not at all to those of the merchant, middleman, and tradesman, nor to the surplus-value accruing to all those other classes who earn their bread, but are not employers of productive labour.

And in order even to get this very limited measure of success, by assuming that unproved statements were facts, he had to reverse a theory he had invented (and previously found necessary to his purpose), viz., that

the value of a commodity varied inversely as the productiveness of labour.

If Marx had been able to prove the truth of this to-be-reversed theory, all that he required would have been attained by it alone, for he could thereby have shown reason why all that went into the pockets of others must belong to the labourer, inasmuch as the labourer himself could regulate the productiveness of his labour as he desired; but far from considering this sound, or that he had proved it, Marx found himself obliged, in order to support his theory of surplus-value, to reverse his theory of the ratio of the productiveness of labour, where, and in so far as, surplus-value was concerned, and to decree that after a certain number of labour hours, during which the original doctrine was true, the reverse of this truth was true for all the succeeding hours of labour, *i.e.*, that after about six hours of labour-time value varied not inversely, but *as* the productiveness of labour.

Of course for his object, viz., to have as much surplus-value as possible for the labourer, this reversal was absolutely necessary, for surplus-value was all that value which arose in surplus-labour time, *i.e.*, all the hours in which the labourer laboured after the six hours in which it is necessary for him to labour for his maintenance. If Marx had been able to prove that six hours' labour was all that was necessary for the maintenance of the labourer, and that another six hours daily had been stolen from him, he would have netted the whole shoal of value of industrial wealth by way of this theory, and it would not have been necessary for him to have formulated any of his other theories; for not only does all the value which arises in all those hours of labour-time over and above six

hours belong to the labourer, and thus doubles his normal wages, but in case even that amount is not sufficient to coincide with the amount of the sum of the whole existing values, the whole can be netted by way of the theory of the inverse variation of value during the first six hours of labour and by the reversal of this theory during the second six hours.

If Marx had succeeded in proving that all surplus value arose from labour, the moral support Socialism requires would have been secured; as it is, those who throw Marx's cardinal theory over, and maintain that Socialism does not fall with his unsound theories, leave it—where Professor Flint says some of Marx's theories are—hanging in the air; and there is nothing for the Socialist but to say (as indeed some do say): "Call it robbery if you like, but we mean to have your wealth."

I propose, therefore, to examine Marx's theory point by point in such language as is comprehensible to ordinary readers, and in such a form as it is to be hoped will not be trying to any.

First, then, Marx says a commodity is an external object which satisfies human wants, which has human labour embodied in it, and which "is not consumed by the producer of it, but by some other person," *e.g.*, a coat.[1]

Thus a coat is a commodity if you do not wear it, and did not make it yourself; if you do wear it, and did make it yourself, it is not a commodity. The loaf which the baker who has made it eats is not a commodity, but the one he sells is a commodity.

"To each man his own commodity has no use-value."[2]

Then that there are two kinds of labour, viz., concrete and abstract; that concrete labour is "the labour

[1] "Student's Marx," p. 1. [2] Ibid., p. 20.

of the tailor working"[1] or the baker kneading; and abstract labour is the labour which has been put into the coat or the loaf.[2]

That "abstract labour creates value."[3]

That "concrete labour is work."[4]

That "abstract labour is labour."

That abstract labour is the opposite of concrete labour.[5]

The propositions: "concrete labour is work," and "abstract labour is labour,"[6] are perhaps incomprehensible only for want of more precise definitions of work and of labour than lexicographers give. We often think of labour as something more severe than work; many do much useful, even fatiguing work, which they hesitate to call labour; but not all the lucid explanations of Marx and his followers show any reason why "abstract labour creates value" rather than "useful concrete productive labour."

There is apparently no reason why the one labour, which is active, should be called "work," and the other, lying passively embodied, should be called "labour;" and, in fact, Marx generally uses the term "labour" in connection with both concrete and abstract.

It is said that Marx's "labour" is labour simply, and that his "work" is "labour combined with utility." Just so. But it is only labour combined with utility ("combinations of matter and concrete

[1] "Concrete productive labour, as that of a tailor working." "Abstract human labour, the labour of the worker, not as tailor, but as labourer."—*Student's Marx*, p. 4.

"The value of a commodity is the amount of abstract human labour embodied in it."—Ibid., p. 2.

[2] Ibid., p. 7. [3] Ibid., p. 5. [4] Ibid., p. 5. [5] Ibid., p. 5.

[6] "Concrete labour becomes the form under which its opposite, abstract human labour, manifests itself."—*Capital*, p. 5.

labour") that has any value, or that can create any. Labour uncombined with utility is either a mere ploughing of sand, or it is an abstract idea which can have no market price. It is this very "labour simply," *i.e.*, abstract labour, this "congelation," this "crystal," as Marx calls it, which he says creates and forms the value of commodities.

It is clear that labour is thus differentiated by Marx in order to get two prices for the same thing.

The whole question of this concrete and abstract resolves itself into this:—

Are two prices to be paid in the market? one for concrete and one for abstract labour?

Are two sorts of labour offered for sale?

Our present system and transactions postulate one sort of labour only, one sort only offered in the market, one sort only commanding price, *i.e.*, the labour which produces the useful article.

Marx's theory (upon which the new system—Socialism—bases its claim for the wealth which is at present the property of others than the labourer) is that there is a second sort of labour, which has not been hitherto recognised and is not paid for, *i.e.*, labour simply, in contradistinction (or, in his own words, "the opposite" of concrete labour) to labour combined with utility. And the question here is whether the labour combined with utility, the useful, concrete, working labour, having commanded and found its price in the market, there is any other labour, the *opposite* of this, which can command any price?

While never abandoning his position, that it is abstract labour which creates value, Marx later assumes from his two sorts of labour a double value, in order to get for the labourer two shillings for one

shilling's worth of work, but he never withdraws his dicta that it is "abstract labour which creates and forms the value of commodities," and that abstract labour is the opposite of concrete labour.

Let us consider what must happen economically if abstract labour is the creative power of value, and concrete labour is its opposite and is always the working power. Is it not a logical sequence that the value created by abstract labour must be destroyed by its opposite? For the opposite of creative is merely destructive. Or should it be asserted that uncreative is the opposite of creative, passivity as opposed to activity, it cannot be so in this connection, for labour working (concrete labour) is not passive, and it is this *working*, this activity, which is opposed by Marx to the creator of value—*i.e.*, abstract labour.

Marx says there are three values, *i.e.*, Use-value, Value, and Exchange-value, and that each is distinct and different from the other.

That "use-values are combinations of matter and concrete labour,"[1] and that they are intrinsic to, and "cannot exist apart from commodities."[2]

That values represent abstract labour;[3] that value is created by abstract labour.[4]

That exchange-value is a consequence of value, and only appears when one commodity is brought into relation with another.[5]

Thus all value arises solely from labour.[6] For if use-values cannot exist apart from commodities, and

[1] "Student's Marx," p. 4. [2] Ibid., p. 2. [3] Ibid., p. 4.
[4] Ibid., p. 5. [5] Ibid., p. 9.
[6] Marx, of course, does not consider that the work of the middleman, seller, or exchanger is labour, therefore he does not say that value in exchange is created, but that it "appears."

commodities are only such things as have human labour in them, it is obvious that use-values cannot, and do not, exist in matter or in anything in which labour is not embodied, consequently it is clear that all value arises solely from labour. Indeed, Marx makes it very clear that he means this, for later on he abstracts use-values entirely, together with the matter of which they consist, and says that we have then only value, *i.e.*, congealed masses of labour-time, "crystals" of the universal social substance, labour.

"As values, all commodities are only definite masses of congealed labour-time," and the magnitude of this value is to be measured "by the quantity of the value-creating substance, the labour, contained in the article."[1]

This is quite clear. The "value-creating substance, the labour." Hence, obviously, the gifts of nature, *e.g.*, air, earth, water, fruits, flowers, &c., &c., have no value. "Air is an example of a use-value that has, normally, no value,"[2]—nor, *pari passu*, has ability, energy, genius—for "value is created by abstract labour," the value-creating substance. Hence, as there is no human labour embodied in the gifts of Nature, (whether air, fruits, flowers, the human voice), it is clear that they are not only not commodities, but have also, like air (which Marx gives as an example), "normally no value," for "the value of a commodity is the amount of human labour embodied in it,"[3] "measured by its duration in weeks, days, and hours."[4] Neither can they have any use-value, for he says: "Use-values are intrinsic to, and cannot exist apart from, *commodities*,"[5] and a commodity is something which

[1] "Capital," vol. i. p. 5. [2] "Student's Marx," p. 4.
[3] Ibid., p. 2. [4] "Capital," p. 5. [5] Ibid.

has human-labour embodied in it;" as no human labour created a voice, talent, or genius, there is consequently no use-value in them, and as there is no use-value in anything which has no labour in it, it follows that use-value is not inherent in matter, is not an attribute of it. It is impossible that things which are not commodities can have use-value, for use-values cannot exist apart from commodities; nor can such things have any value, for value is created by abstract labour and is only a definite mass of congealed labour-time; so there is no value of any sort in them!

Yet Marx, while laying down the preceding propositions as scientific truth, says air is a use-value that has no value: "air is an example of a use-value that has, normally, no value." Which is a flat contradiction of the statement that "use-values cannot exist apart from commodities,"[1] for air has no human labour embodied in it.

Allied to the preceding is the dogma: "A thing can be a use-value without having value."[2] The meaning of this is, that a thing can be valuable for use without being valuable at all; or that a thing can have value in use without having any value at all. Which is pure paradox, a contradiction in terms. For can we think of anything which is useful to man which has not value commensurate with its usefulness, whether this be small or great?

Marx, of course, had an ulterior purpose in view when he formulated these contradictions;[3] it was no

[1] "Student's Marx," p. 2. [2] "Capital," p. 7.

[3] Professor Flint says: "Passion is a bad counsellor. And the soul of Marx was filled with passion; with party hate; with personal animosities; with revolutionary ambition. His interest in economics was neither that of the scientist nor of the philanthropist, but of the political and social agitator; and he put forth

doubt the difficulty he had in making false doctrine look like true which compelled him to try, by the strength of his name, to pass off as logic what is utterly illogical; and he has to a very great extent succeeded, for there are always plenty of men ready to receive as gospel, and without examining it, anything which falls from the lips of ability.

Everything which could be made to look as if two values could be got out of labour Marx twists to his purpose; even in so simple a matter as process and product, he says, *e.g.*, "The blacksmith forges and the product is a forging."[1] Now, the *product* is not "a forging;" the forging is the *process*. Marx is very learned, but he conveniently forgets many things; for instance, the conjugation of verbs: present tense, indicative mood: he forges or is forging; forges or is forging are clearly synonymous. It requires no exemplification to demonstrate that forging is the process, and that the bar or the horseshoe is the *product*, the thing forged.[2]

Marx takes two synonymous words, alters an elementary rule of grammar, attaches to the words two different meanings, and then confuses and identifies process with product—as flagrant an audacity as to confuse subject with object or make them identical.

It is very necessary to be clear upon such points, for it is out of such misstatements, such perversions of the elements of grammar, of language, and of common sense, that Marx builds his whole fabric of different and

his strength entirely in manipulating it into an instrument of agitation. . . . There was wide discontent. He framed a doctrine with a view to justify and inflame it."—*Socialism*, p. 194.

[1] "Capital," p. 160.

[2] If, as has been alleged, forging, as regards the forger, is a product, then every process is a product.

multiplied sorts of things that are absolutely the same.

Having, however, in contradiction of his other scientific truths, laid down as scientific truth that "air is a use-value," he says: "An article produced for the personal consumption of the producer is a use-value."[1] Thus it is obvious that either we produce the air, or that air is not useful to us, for we are the consumers and not the producers of it. Or thus: Air is a use-value; we use air, *sequitur* we produce it; or we do not use air, for "an article produced for the personal consumption of the producer is a use-value."[2]

It might, however, still be asked, seeing that ability, energy, and genius have value and do produce value and use-value, whether the terms labour and the products of labour do not include ability, energy, and genius, and their products?

The answer which proves that Marx means to try to persuade us that only manual labour produces value and use-value resides in his own words and definitions: "use-values are combinations of matter and concrete labour."[3] "How, then, is the magnitude of this value to be measured? Plainly, by the quantity of the value-creating substance, the labour contained in the article. The quantity of labour, however, is measured by its duration, and labour-time in its turn finds its standard in weeks, days, and hours."[4] . . . "That which determines the magnitude of the value of any article is the amount of labour, or the labour-time socially necessary for its production."[5] "As values, all commodities are only definite masses of congealed labour-

[1] "Capital," p. 4.
[2] "Student's Marx," p. 4.
[3] Ibid., p. 4.
[4] "Capital," p. 5.
[5] Ibid., p. 6.

time."[1] "Skilled labour counts only as simple labour intensified, or rather as multiplied simple labour, a given quantity of skilled being considered equal to a greater quantity of simple labour."[2] "With reference to use-value, the labour contained in a commodity counts only qualitatively; with reference to value, it counts only quantitatively, and must first be reduced to human labour pure and simple. In the former case it is a question of How or What? in the latter, of How much? How long a time? Since the magnitude of the value of a commodity represents only the quantity of labour embodied in it, it follows that all commodities, when taken in certain proportions, must be equal in value."[3] "All kinds of labour are equal and equivalent."[4]

I draw attention to the reiterated dogma that *value* is measured by *quantity* of *labour*, and *quantity* of *labour* by *time;* that the amount of value is determined by the amount of labour which produced it measured by *time;* that skilled labour is only worth in value a larger amount of simple labour; and that "all kinds of labour are equal and equivalent."

Is it possible to read into these enunciations anything but *manual* labour?

Then, to clinch this, we are told, "The less the productiveness of labour is, the greater is the labour-time necessary for the production of the commodity, and therefore the greater is the value."[5]

That is to say: the slower the tailor is sewing his seams, or the carpenter sawing his planks, the more valuable will the coat or the planks be, because

[1] "Capital," p. 6.
[2] Ibid., p. 7.
[3] Ibid., p. 13.
[4] Ibid., p. 29.
[5] "Student's Marx," p. 3.

more labour-time is consumed in the production of the commodity; thus it follows that skill, capability, and expertness, which enable men to work faster, detract from the value of the commodity.

"The labour-*time* necessary for the production of a commodity, and therefore the amount of abstract human labour embodied in the commodity, and therefore the value of the commodity, vary inversely as the productiveness of labour."[1] Thus the clumsy or idle tailor or carpenter, who has only sewn one seam or sawn one plank in an hour, has produced as much value as the skilful or industrious man who has sewn two seams or sawn two planks.

This is, of course, an absurdity, like the preceding inference, but Marx feels that not only is it a legitimate inference, but that it is the only meaning which can logically be attached to his words; for he foresees the interpretation and shows that he knows it is the only fair one, but he is far too crafty to tabulate the doctrine himself in the plain bald language which makes its absurdity clear; he therefore meets the difficulty with an explanation; for he must at any cost attain his purpose and secure two shillings for the one shilling's worth of work done by the idle or unskilled labourer, so he ingeniously tries to save himself thus: "Some people might think that if the value of a commodity is determined by the quantity of labour spent on it, the more idle and unskilful the labourer, the more valuable would his commodity be, because more would be required in its production."[2] (That is precisely what we do think.) "The labour, however, that forms the substance of value, is homogeneous human labour, expenditure of one uniform labour-power. The total

[1] "Student's Marx," p. 7. [2] "Capital," p. 5.

labour-power of society, which is embodied in the sum-total of the values of all commodities produced by that society, counts here as one homogeneous mass of human labour-power, composed though it be of innumerable individual units. . . . The labour-time socially necessary is that required to produce an article under the normal conditions of production, and with the average degree of skill and intensity prevalent at the time."[1]

Very well. Then, presumably, instead of taking one labourer as against another, one workshop where an inferior class of work is turned out as against another where a better class of workmen is employed, or one town or neighbourhood as against another, we are to take the whole of England (indeed, in the very next sentence Marx takes England as an example), or the whole even of Great Britain, in order to ensure equal payment of inferior and superior workmen (an effort that is continually made in strikes and by trades unions), and then calculate the value of—*e.g.*, the lines of railway by "the quantity of labour . . . measured by its duration . . . in weeks, days, and hours,"[2] which was involved in the making of them. The area—the whole of Great Britain—to find the value of these lines is probably large enough. We take "the total labour-power of society" to find the value of a commodity "produced by that society."

Then we go to France. We find inferior lines made

[1] "The notion of resolving the value of things into the quantity of labour embodied in them, or of measuring their value by the length of time which it has taken to produce them, is thus a manifest error. . . . To speak of a doctrine or scheme which rests on such a basis as 'scientific' is an abuse of language."—*Flint*, "*Socialism*," p. 113.

[2] "Capital," p. 5.

by slower and less skilled navvies. So inferior is the value of these lines that the French have at times found it worth while to import bodies of navvies from England, paying their travelling expenses and higher wages. The English navvies, it has been found, do their work more quickly and better than the French. According to Marx's theory, the inferior lines the French navvies took a certain time to make are of greater value than the superior ones the English navvies took a less time to make. For: "The less P is, the greater is the labour-time necessary for the production of the commodity, and therefore the greater is V. And the greater P is, the less is the labour-time necessary for the production of this commodity, and therefore the less is V. So that V varies not directly as P, but inversely as $P - V \propto \frac{1}{P}$."[1]

Therefore it is certain that the better lines which were made quickly are of less value than the worse lines which took longer to make,[2] because there is less labour-time in them.[3] It is *time* and time only which

[1] "Student's Marx," p. 3. P stands for "productiveness of labour," V for value.

[2] "Marx takes 'simple average labour,' 'simple unskilled labour,' as his basis of reckoning and reasoning. . . . He represents 'average' as exchanged against 'average,' one hour's work of one man as in the abstract equivalent to one hour's work of another man . . . in a word, has rested his theory not on reality, but on a fictitious abstraction."—*Flint*, "*Socialism*," p. 149.

[3] "There is another even greater danger inherent in the socialistic theory of value. It takes away the premium for efficiency. It makes a man's claims for reward depend not upon what he has done for others, but upon how he has occupied himself. Time wasted counts for as much as time spent. . . . To say, as Marx does, that value depends on the quantity of socially necessary labour represented by an article, introduces two conflicting standards—a fact whose consequence Marx fails to take into account."—*Hadley*, "*Economics*," p. 95.

determines the value of commodities. "The labour-time socially necessary for their production asserts itself as the thing that determines the value of commodities."[1]

Thus it seems a self-evident proposition that if the value of the product is reckoned by the amount of labour which is reckoned by time, there is no room left in the statement for anything but manual labour; and that neither genius, ability, energy, nor skill can count, nor the products of these. Indeed, Marx explicitly says that "skilled labour counts only as a multiple of unskilled labour," and is to be reckoned as so and so much more time; and that, throughout his work, "every kind of labour is regarded as simple unskilled labour." Can "simple unskilled labour" be any other than manual labour?[2]

Moreover, by his definitions of a commodity, and of use-value, and of value, Marx practically repudiates the idea that art, literature, science, or anything but that which is produced by manual labour has any value or any use-value,[3] for he excludes all such things, first, by

[1] "Student's Marx," p. 16.

[2] "Marx falls into a still less excusable error. . . . He could see no labour constitutive or originative of value except manual labour. He overlooks what scientific knowledge, what inventive genius, what commercial talent and enterprise, what powers of business management and organisation have done for industry. . . . He could not, however, overlook the distinction between skilled and unskilled manual labour, that being obvious even to the bodily eye. What does he make of it? . . . Our sculptor gets for one day's work twenty times as much as our hodman gets for the same length of labour, and labour as intense and much less pleasant. How does this happen if duration of labour be the measure of value? 'Oh!' replies Marx, 'I am willing to reckon the sculptor's day equal to twenty days of the hodman.' But that is no answer." —*Flint*, "*Socialism*," p. 148.

[3] "The doctrine of Marx leaves out of account the infinite

his definition of a commodity (apart from which use-values cannot exist) as something "not consumed by the producer of it, but by some other person;" books, music, pictures, and such things are not *consumed* by any persons; and next, by his basic theory that value is created by abstract *labour*, abstract labour being "the labour embodied in the *commodity*, measured by *time*."[1]

It will thus scarcely be contravened that Marx *practically* denies that ability, talent, and genius form any part of the value of anything, or that value arises from anything except manual labour, and that his object was to secure the whole price of everything for the manual labourer.

From the consideration of the preceding great scientific truths we go on to the next:—

"A commodity is a use-value and a value."

The reader may perhaps ask: Is this bad grammar, or does Marx mean what he says?

A loaf is a commodity; a commodity *has* a value. Marx says it *is* a value; is it then a value which has a value?

And is there any sense in making such a statement?

Has the commodity an attribute, *i.e.*, value? or is the commodity the attribute? We are left to decide this for ourselves.

Marx treats the words commodity and attribute as

differences of quality in labour, and implicitly reduces the labour of rare intelligence, of exquisite artistic taste and supreme genius to the level of mere muscular exertion, which may be replaced with advantage, wherever possible, by the action of a machine or an animal."—*Flint*, "*Socialism*," p. 127.

[1] It is, of course, in consequence of this that Socialists deny that higher attainments should be paid higher than manual produce, and ask why should a doctor or an author expect more pay than a manual labourer and argue that he ought to have less. *Vide* "Merrie England."

if they were exchangeable terms; and *has* and *is* are clearly used by him as if they were synonymous, not of course from ignorance or negligence, but merely by subtle misuse and confusion to hide his meaning and the fallacy.[1]

Then, having been told that concrete labour creates use-value, and that abstract labour creates value, and that concrete labour is the opposite of abstract labour,[2] we find that: "The process of producing a commodity is a labour-process creating use-value, and also a process of creating value."[3] Therefore here again Marx propounds a paradox, for the process of producing—*e.g.*, the tailor working—is concrete labour, and as he says here it is a process which creates value, it can scarcely be the opposite (as he also said) of abstract labour, which is the creator of value. "Values represent human labour in the abstract."[4]

Yet he not only speaks of "the value of a commodity as distinct from its use-value,"[5] but also of "the contrast intrinsic to all commodities between use-value and value."[6] Here again use-value and value are so different as to be contrasts. He does not explain how, if these two sorts of labour are opposites, and if what each produces is a contrast to that which the other produces, "the process of producing" the one value produces at the same time in the same concretion or abstraction the other sort of value which is so distinct as to be a contrast.

We are taught by him that there are two opposing powers producing distinct and contrasting values, and

[1] "Student's Marx," p. 20.

[2] Concrete labour (embodied in B) becomes the phenomenal form of its opposite, abstract human labour (embodied in A). "Student's Marx," p. 9.

[3] Ibid., p. 44.

[4] Ibid., p. 4.

[5] Ibid., p. 2.

[6] Ibid., p. 20.

then we are told that that which the one opposing power produces is the same as its contrast which the other opposing power produces.

In any case, use-value and value are stated to be two different, even contrasting things, opposites, yet the statement that "a use-value or useful article has value only because human labour in the abstract has been embodied or materialised in it,"[1] proves that value and the value of use-value are identical.[2] For if use-value has no value except that which labour in the abstract bestows then its value is *value* pure and simple. Thus does Marx, after complicated arguments to prove that one thing is two, stultify himself by demonstrating that these two things are one.

There would, however, be a way of making sense of this, but that would not suit Marx's purpose or of course he would have adopted it.

It will have been observed that use-value is incidentally defined as a useful article, thus, "use-value or useful article," implying that use-value and useful article are synonymous terms; for some part of Marx's purpose it is necessary for you to think they are, but not for his main purpose. Thus: "the utility of a thing makes it a use-value."[3] It is clear that here the thing is a use-value (potentially). And "a commodity, such as iron . . . is a use-value" (actually).[4] But in the next sentence he says, "the use-values of commodities

[1] "Capital," p. 2.

[2] The thing embodied and the material embodiment are, of course, two distinct things; but if use-value has value *only because* of the *embodiment*, then this *value* economically is clearly identical with the other value. Since there is no value except that which the embodiment confers, *use* is only *utility*, from which Marx says no value can arise.

[3] "Capital," p. 2.

[4] Ibid., p. 2.

furnish," &c.[1] Here we see that use-values are not the commodities themselves but the attributes of commodities. And again: "if we leave out of consideration the use-value of commodities."[2] Again it is an *attribute* of the commodity, *not* the *commodity* itself, as it is in the former propositions.

Then we have: "even the product of labour itself has undergone a change in our hands. If we make abstraction from its use-value, we make abstraction at the same time from the material elements and shapes that make the product a use-value. We see in it no longer a table, a house, yarn, or any other useful thing."[3]

Here again the product is declared inferentially to be the use-value itself, and we are told in the same breath to abstract its use-value, *i.e.*, itself! Naturally, as Marx says, if you do that you abstract the article itself and leave nothing at all.

If he had left out "use-value" altogether and had said: a useful article has value (he could have given as narrow a meaning as he chose to the word useful, for his purpose the narrower the better), he would have talked common-sense, and have avoided ambiguity and self-contradiction. He would have at least shown that he respected the difference between an active and a passive verb, the use of *has* and of *is*, and the difference between an object and its properties. Why did he express himself as if he did not?[4]

Because "a useful article" would not have suited his purpose, for his whole system rests upon his theory of so-called value by which he means to

[1] "Capital," p. 4. [2] Ibid., p. 4. [3] Ibid., p. 4.

[4] "It was indispensable to his convincing labourers that they were robbed, that he should be able to assure them that they produced all value."—*Flint*, "*Socialism*," p. 110.

prove that there are two values, use-value and value, both arising from labour, and by this means to get a double price for labour by counting its value twice over.[1] It is like trying to get two coins for one by showing, by some double-shuffle, that one coin is two. He finds this so difficult to do that he has sometimes, in order to make his sentence at all readable, to call use-value the commodity itself, and sometimes an attribute of it, or a property which can be abstracted, or rather can *not* be abstracted (although he says abstract it), for in order to abstract it you must (also as he says) do away altogether with the thing itself, which *has* and *is* the property.

Let us, however, try to understand; we need not expect to do so in the glancing of an eye, for Marx says that even a commodity is "a very queer thing, abounding in metaphysical subtleties and theological niceties;"[2] that it is "something transcendent," that it has a "mystical character," "an enigmatical character."[3]

We shall have a juster appreciation of him, of his theory, of his views, if we sit at his feet and learn.

Linen, he says, is a commodity, that it is a use-value, and that it is value. "As a use-value the linen is something palpably different from the coat; as value it is the same as the coat. . . . The fact that it is value is made manifest by its equality with the coat, just as the sheep's nature of a Christian is shown by his resemblance to the Lamb of God."[4]

The effort in the first part of this remarkable utterance

[1] It has been explained by apologists that one value is derived from "combination with labour" and another is "derived from labour" itself. But the answer to this is, what value can arise from labour which is not combined with anything?

[2] "Capital," p. 41. [3] Ibid., p. 42. [4] Ibid., p. 20.

to obtain two prices for one and the same labour, by making linen "different" and "the same," denying to it, as linen, all value unless it is in the coat, may possibly be relegated to future consideration by the reader who finds food for conflicting thought and feeling in the extraordinary simile with which the sentence closes. It may be well to leave the exposition of this to the Christian Socialist, within whose realm it seems to come, and to confine ourselves to more secular forms.

We are told, then, that "a commodity *is* a use-value and a value,"[1] and that a "use-value *has* value."[2] It follows that a use-value *has* a commodity, *i.e.*, value, has in fact itself (whatever that may mean), seeing that a commodity *is* a value. Also that a use-value having a commodity, *i.e.*, value, has itself for a commodity, for it "is a use-value and value." If that is scientific truth, it is not logic nor common-sense, nor grammar, nor anything which science or intelligence can recognise.

Further, "To each man his own commodity has no use-value,"[3] for "a commodity is something which is not consumed by the producer."[4] Hence "a use-value which has value only because labour is embodied in it" being thus made identical with value, it follows that the loaf which the baker makes has to him no use-value and no value.

Further, "*use-values* are intrinsic to and *cannot exist apart from commodities*," and "a commodity is an object which has human labour embodied in it;" therefore trees, flowers, fruits, have no use-value nor value in their natural state, for "a use-value, or useful article, has value only because human labour in the abstract

[1] "Student's Marx," p. 44.
[2] "Capital," p. 5.
[3] "Student's Marx," p. 20.
[4] Ibid., p. 1.

has been embodied or materialised[1] in it." Yet men find the shade of trees very useful, and also the fruits and flowers which they bear.

The effort is to make value intrinsic to labour *alone*, by stating first that "use-values are intrinsic to and cannot exist apart from commodities," next that "a commodity is an object which has human labour embodied in it," and then that "a use-value, or useful article, has value only because human labour in the abstract has been embodied in it," *i.e.*, that use-value (utility) has no value unless there is labour in it.

Now, if a use-value is a useful article, and if it has value because it is useful, it is clear it *can* exist apart from commodities, for the earth we walk on, the sun, its light, its heat, the air we breathe, water, &c., &c., are all useful, and have value without any human labour being embodied in them, they can and do exist apart from commodities, which are articles which have human labour embodied in them.

Further a use-value, a useful article, has value because of its utility, and not because (much less "only because") human labour in the abstract is embodied in it, but quite independently of labour, *e.g.*, shade, rain, &c.

It is true such things have no *price*, but price is not synonymous with value, and Marx did not say price, he said value, because he knew he could not get price without value; so his struggle is to get all value and consequently the whole of the price for the labourer, and therefore it is he maintains that "use-value has value only because human labour is embodied in it," thus that value is created by labour.

That Marx means this he makes quite clear: "How

[1] "Capital," vol. i. pp. 5–6.

then is the magnitude of the value to be measured? Plainly by the quantity of the value-creating substance, the labour contained in the article."[1]

Nothing can be clearer than that; but Marx knew it was not true, that it was so flagrantly untrue that it would not be accepted; so again he provides a loophole of escape in case any one should try to pin him down, and a weapon of defence in the shape, of course, of a contradiction: "we see then that labour is not the only source of wealth."[2] But naturally he contradicts himself again as perforce he must, unless he abandon all his theories of value, which he has no intention of doing, for these theories are the pivot upon which his whole system turns. "The value of a commodity represents human labour;"[3] "it (labour) creates and forms the value of commodities;"[4] "the magnitude of the value of a commodity represents only the quantity of labour embodied in it."[5]

The contradiction is clear and emphatic.

But although these affirmations are easy to make they require proof, and Marx has striven hard to prove them, but his efforts have for the most part consisted merely of other equally improved affirmations, such as: if there were not a "something" common to all commodities other than utility, "whatever utility they might have, they would have no value;" and that in order to arrive at an estimate of value in exchange,

[1] "Capital," p. 5.

[2] Professor Flint says: "This would be quite satisfactory if Marx allowed that the matter of commodities counted for anything in the purchase or price of them. . . . But this Marx denies. And his whole theory of the exploitation of labour rests on the denial. He represents labour as the sole source of the value of everything; the labour spent on anything as the alone just price of it. What a preposterous notion."—*Socialism*, p. 109.

[3] "Capital," p. 11. [4] Ibid., p. 14. [5] Ibid., p. 13.

we must "leave out of consideration the use-value of commodities." These and similar statements stand in as much need of proof as the statement they are supposed to prove.

Marx wishes us to look at all exchangeable or marketable articles as "products of human labour in the abstract," "crystals of the universal social substance," and to forget all about human desire and natural objects which have not been produced by human labour; and above all to repudiate entirely the notion that there is anything more valuable in human beings than their manual labour; genius, talent, enterprise, energy, inventive capacity, artistic feeling, and all the highest attributes, which alone are productive of the highest value and utility, are to be left out of consideration. Nothing of this sort, in his science, constitutes or originates value. They are to be put out of sight, together with all rare and finest products of nature in the consideration of value, and only "homogeneous human labour, expenditure of one uniform labour-power" the value of which can be measured by manual labour-time is to count as value.

Such doctrine can never be accepted on mere allegations in place of proof. It was strange Marx should think that even manual labourers, except the very roughest, would be content to renounce all that was most valuable in a calculation of value, or that they would accept in practice such a statement as: "A commodity may be the product of the most skilled labour, but its value, by equating it to the product of simple unskilled labour, represents a definite quantity of the latter labour alone."[1]

Labour, however, does not create the whole value of

[1] "Capital," p. 11.

a commodity; the value it creates is often but a small part of the whole. The design of—*e.g.*—a chair is created in the mind of Ability, of the artist; then there is the natural value of the wood, some woods being naturally finer, more beautiful, and more suitable than others; this is intrinsic value, and quite irrespective of the labour which has been applied. The ordinary unskilled labour, which constructs the rough chair, creates very little value.

But although labour, especially when directed by ability, does create some value, it is not the creator of value unconditioned and absolute, as is implied in such statements as: "abstract labour creates value;"[1] and "values represent human labour in the abstract."[2]

Marx says he allows for matter as use-value in the body of a commodity, but unless use-value can be stripped bare of value, which is not possible, he contradicts himself when he says: "the magnitude of the value of a commodity represents only the quantity of labour embodied in it."[3]

This same habit of postulating a hypothesis, and by a stroke of his wand transforming it into a proven fact, is exemplified also in "To each man his own commodity has no use-value."[4] This proposition naturally grows out of "A commodity is an object not consumed by the producer."[5] But although Marx may postulate this, he must not build upon it as truth all which naturally grows out of its actual falsity. As a matter of fact, some commodities are consumed by the producers of them, and a man's own commodities are useful to him.

The only meaning of the word commodity, even con-

[1] "Student's Marx," p. 5: "the abstract labour which creates value is labour." [2] Ibid., p. 4. [3] "Capital," p. 13.
[4] "Student's Marx," p. 20. [5] Ibid., p. 1.

ventionally, is something useful. It does not necessarily mean useful to this person or that, and it carries nothing in it about producer or consumer.

If one statement, however, is more astonishing than another, it is the following, because it makes one wonder whether Marx ever expected any intelligent person to consider his doctrines at all; whether his idea was that, by making his theory very tortuous and involved, the world would accept as gospel that which had been laid down in imposing and ponderous form for pedants to delight in, but which ordinary mortals would be content to accept without investigation at the hands of so commanding a miracle-worker. "Concrete labour (embodied in B) becomes the phenomenal form of its opposite . . . abstract labour (embodied in A)."

We know there are Noumena and Phenomena, that phenomena are the visible forms, the appearances of the noumena. We take it to be an accepted and undisputed fact that the phenomena of anything are the visible forms of the thing itself, and we should like to know how the phenomenal form of the thing itself can become the visible form of the opposite of the noumena. Yet Marx, who no doubt shows himself to be a most accurate scholar and scientist, tells us seriously that something can be the phenomenal form of its opposite.

Here is the illustration of this luminous law: "The value of the commodity linen is expressed by the actual bodily form of the commodity coat, the value of one by the use-value of the other."[1]

How can the *value* of the linen be expressed by the *form* of the coat?

"Use-value becomes the form of manifestation, the phenomenal form of its opposite, value."[2] Thus value

[1] "Capital," p. 20. [2] Ibid., p. 25.

is expressed by its opposite, use-value; the amount of abstract labour is expressed by the combination of matter and concrete labour which *preceded* it, and ceased before the abstract embodied labour could come into existence; the embodiment was the result of the working; Marx says the result is expressed by the process. "In order to inform us that its sublime reality as value is not the same as its buckram body, it says that value has the appearance of a coat, and consequently that so far as the linen is value, it and the coat are as like as two peas. We may here remark that the language of commodities has, besides Hebrew, many other more or less correct dialects."[1]

This seems an important contribution to science; it is one of the many indications of the struggle Marx makes to get rid unperceived of one of these inconvenient values which he invented in order to get two prices for one thing. His struggle to do this is so desperate that he at last abolishes even everything material. He says: "As exchange-values they (commodities) are merely different quantities, and consequently do not contain an atom of use-value. If, then, we leave out of consideration the use-value of commodities, they have only one common property left, that of being products of labour. . . . If we make abstraction from its use-value we make abstraction at the same time from the material elements and shapes that make the product a use-value; we see in it no longer a table, a house, yarn, or any other useful thing.[2] . . . Along with the useful qualities of the

[1] "Capital," pp. 20-21.

[2] "The whole world of commodities is transformed into a fitting paradise for a German metaphysician, one filled with characterless and undifferentiated objects, with things which have no elements or qualities, bodies or shapes; . . . with 'products of

products themselves we put out of sight both the useful character of the various kinds of labour embodied and the concrete forms of that labour; there is nothing left but what is common to them all; all are reduced to one and the same sort of labour, human labour in the abstract. Let us now consider the residue of each of the products; it consists of the same unsubstantial reality in each, a mere congelation of homogeneous human labour, of labour-power expended without regard to the mode of its expenditure. All that these things now tell us is, that human labour is embodied in them."[1]

"If we leave out of consideration the utility of an article"—why should we? why should we shut our eyes to a fact, to the most important fact to the buyer and the most important factor in exchange? In order that Marx may pronounce: now the whole price belongs to the labourer; "only one common property left, that of being products of labour."

But how can we abstract use-value, the utility an article has, when we are considering its value? (utility of course in its broadest, uncontracted, entirest sense: poetry, art, beauty of every sort having the highest use-value). Utility is the only thing we do consider; if we leave that out of consideration, if we do abstract it, we do not consider further, nor need the article at all: no buyer appears in the market to meet the producer when utility is out of the question and there can be no question of exchange; in fact, as Marx himself says, there is no article left to consider, for by abstraction of its utility

human labour in the abstract; with crystals of the universal social substance, values.' What rubbish! What poor dialectic jugglery! And *that* is what Socialists take for invincible logic." —*Flint*, "*Socialism*," p. 143.

[1] "Capital," p. 5.

abstraction has been made of "the material elements and shapes that make the product a use-value."[1]

"The value of commodities is the very opposite of the coarse materiality of their substance, not an atom of matter enters into its composition."[2] Mark, not an atom of matter enters into the composition of value.

There will then be left that which we do not want, which no one will buy, which cannot even be brought to market nor offered for sale, which is without form, a "pseudo-scientific myth," an abstraction which no one can see, feel, or touch—*i.e.*, "crystals of the universal social substance," "congelations;" unsubstantialities which do not contain an atom of use-value.

And labour is treated in the same way as are the values; it is also differentiated with blowing of trumpets and a great blare of scientific modes; two sorts, concrete and abstract, are created and are dressed up in mathematical formulæ; they are twisted and untwisted, turned inside out and topsy-turvy; superhuman efforts are made to get two perfect entities, and when they have been got fairly or unfairly on their legs, superhuman efforts are again made to get these two into one, into a convenient unity; but they will not amalgamate, and there is not room for them both in the same coach, so the double flirtation comes to an untimely end; the subtle creator and trotter-out of these masqueraders ends by turning concretions out on the road and driving off with abstractions alone.

Thus with a stroke of the wizard's wand, hey presto! everything vanishes except abstract labour, which is at the same time the result of everything and the source and essence of everything!

[1] "Capital," p. 4. [2] Ibid., p. 15.

Concrete labour together with use-values having served their turn, which was to show that they were something which as value given must be paid for, are shaken off and left altogether out of the question. "As values, all commodities are only definite masses of congealed labour-time,"[1] *i.e.*, abstract-labour.

Rarity and the products of genius are alike cleared summarily out of the way; the value of genius and of rarity is measured by the amount of labour-time it takes to discover them. A Raphael picture is rare, and the value of this rarity, the value of the picture, the value of the artist's mind, arises from the amount of labour-time it has taken to discover the picture and the artist! Or perhaps the time it took to paint the picture. Shakespeare's great value doubtless arises from the amount of labour-time which labouring men have spent in discovering him. The great value of his work arises solely from the vast amount of labour measured in time which it took to produce it. For there is no more reason why a picture or a poem should be left out of the question of value than a wall-paper or a chair, nor why the poet or artist and their products should not be considered as much as the labourer and his products.

A diamond is Marx's chosen example. "Diamonds are of very rare occurrence on the earth's surface . . . hence their discovery costs on an average a great deal of labour-time."[2] But a rare diamond takes no more time to find than a common one; it probably takes less, being generally large; its value arises not because more or less labour was spent upon its discovery (as a matter of fact, a great deal more labour is spent upon cutting

[1] "Capital," pp. 5-6. [2] Ibid., p. 7.

and polishing a number of small stones than on one large one), but because there are not enough fine diamonds to supply those who demand them. Some of the finest stones are those which were found long ago; whatever their original value may have been it is much greater now, not because more labour has been spent on them, but because there are many buyers waiting for one of these stones to come into the market. There is no labour-time being spent on the discovery of them. There is comparatively no value in the workmanship of the setting; nothing is allowed for this nor given for it when sold (unless it has art-value—*i.e.* value which ability has given); the only value the jewel has is intrinsic value, *i.e.* rarity—the value of the stone independently of the value of the labour bestowed on its cutting and setting, which comparatively is infinitesimal. This high value of the rarity of natural beauty has been added to by time, which has increased the number of purchasers, while the supply has not proportionately increased. If all the labourers of England were to spend all their labour-time on polishing and cutting ordinary African diamonds, they would not produce any of the value which lies locked up in one large old stone of fine water upon which comparatively little labour was spent.

Marx abstracts use-value, rarity, talent, Nature: "Exchange-value is only a definite social expression of the amount of labour that has been bestowed upon a commodity, and therefore Nature has nothing to do with it."[1] He thus abolishes all materials, ignores beauty, genius, and demand and supply, in order to show that labour is the sole source of value, that labour is the only thing in the world which is anything.

[1] "Student's Marx," p. 18.

Annihilate everything but labour, and labour and value of labour alone remain: "There is nothing left but what is common to them all." All are reduced to one and the same sort of labour, human labour in the abstract.[1]

In order to get the whole price of everything for labour, to get labour paid over and over again out of the price which is due to everything other than labour, Marx categorises different sorts of values which he finds inconvenient when he has got them. At first he seems uncertain as to how many he will have, and scarcely to know where to find value, or as he says, "where to have it;" he considers it so mysterious: "The whole mystery of the form of value lies hidden;" it is not of course a mystery to any one else, nor is it hidden from any other, because every one else sees it where it naturally lies. Marx does not want it there, and will not see it there; he wants to place it somewhere else, and naturally finds that rather difficult; he wants you to see it where he tries to place it, but as it is not there at all it cannot be seen there; so he says it is a mystery, it is hidden, and he quotes Dame Quickly: we don't know "where to have it."

Having expatiated upon *value* and use-value as the values of which commodities are composed, and on use-values as inherent in commodities, intrinsic to and as something which cannot exist apart from them, he says: "At first sight a commodity presents itself to us as a complex of two things—use-value and exchange-value. Later on we saw also that labour, too, possesses the same twofold nature."[2] Here we notice first that one of his two previous values is got rid of—*i.e.* value, and exchange-value is slipped into its place. Marx made it very clear that value and use-value were two; he says:

[1] "Capital," p. 5. [2] Ibid., p. 5.

"a thing can be a use-value without having value," and he declared that the two values were opposites. We were also told that commodities "are the material depositaries of the *third* kind of value—exchange-value;"[1] and to the consideration of exchange-value we are led "by way of the value of the commodity, as distinct from its use-value."[2] Here we have distinctly three different sorts of value, declared plainly to be three, as thus: "the *third* kind of value," but the moment three are inconvenient we find one slipped out as if it had never been there, and have it ruled that value is "twofold,"—*i.e.* "use-value and exchange-value." However, we again very soon find that, far from being merely twofold, or even threefold, there are many varieties of value: "to all the different varieties of values in use there correspond as many different kinds of useful labour."[3]

This is very protective, and demonstrates how very acute Marx was; for in case any one should prove there were other kinds of value, he nullifies these possible other kinds beforehand by declaring that no matter what number of values there are, there are as many different kinds of labour corresponding to them ready to appropriate them, having already by a stroke of his pen put all kinds of labour except one out of court by "reducing them all to unskilled labour;" "we shall henceforth account every kind of labour to be simple, unskilled labour."[4]

But although he thus lies in wait to crush any wish you may possibly conceive to prove there are more kinds of value, he never practically avails himself of more than four—*i.e.* value, use-value, exchange-value,

[1] "Capital," p. 8.
[2] "Student's Marx," p. 2.
[3] "Capital," p. 9.
[4] Ibid., p. 12.

and surplus value, and eventually gets rid of two at least of these; he matches three of them with different kinds of labour—*i.e.* concrete labour, abstract labour, and surplus labour. I believe he has not matched the fourth value, nor am I aware that he has mentioned what the "many different kinds of useful labour," and all the different varieties of values in use which correspond to them are.

We need not wonder at this; indeed we may consider it very laudable self-denial, seeing how very unmanageable Marx finds his team, that he takes to tandem. We have seen that his two "distinct values," value and use-value, were somehow shuffled into one another by making one merely the expression of the other, whereas it had until then been its opposite, and we were told that we were no longer to see in any useful thing a table, a house, or yarn, or anything material, but only the "labour, which was embodied in them;" then having thus made way for "the *third* kind of value," *i.e.* exchange-value, it was ruled that value was "*twofold*," *i.e.* use-value and exchange-value.[1]

From this we concluded that as value and use-value had been shuffled into one, so now value and exchange-value were hidden in each other and thus made practically one; in fact, there was a sort of hint of this: "we started from exchange-value in order to get at the value that lies hidden behind it;"[2] or that after all they were being made very much one and the same thing, seeing that it was exchange-value which brought value to light: "value is realised by exchange."[3] "Exchange-value is a consequence, not, as the vulgar economists hold, a cause of value."[4] But having

[1] "Capital," p. 5.
[2] Ibid, p. 15.
[3] "Student's Marx," p. 19.
[4] Ibid., p. 9.

practically got rid of: "a commodity is a use-value and a value" by: "a commodity presented itself to us as a complex of two things—use-value and exchange-value,"[1] we were scarcely prepared (seeing that thus *value* had already been abstracted) for a total abstraction of *use-value*. "The exchange of commodities is evidently an act characterised by a total abstraction from use-value;"[2] "as exchange-values they" (commodities) "are merely different quantities, and consequently do not contain an atom of use-value. "All are reduced to one and the same sort of labour, human labour in the abstract."[3]

Clearly, if only one labour (according to the doctrine that each sort of value has its corresponding labour) then only the one value, and we have already indeed seen value got rid of and use-values abstracted.

Not that Marx by any means wishes to convey that there is only one value, the value arising from exchange; far from it. He says: "It is evident that it is not the exchange of commodities that regulates the magnitude of their value, but it is the magnitude of their value that regulates the proportion in which they exchange."[4] He is only persistently determined to get *all* the price for labour, hence his difficulties with his values, hence his introduction of, or abstraction from, to suit his purpose of the moment; labour measured by time is the Alpha and Omega of the whole, thus:—

"What determines the magnitude of the value of any article is the amount of labour socially necessary, or the labour-time socially necessary for its production."[5] "As values, all commodities are only definite masses of congealed labour-time."[6]

[1] "Capital," p. 30. [2] Ibid., p. 4. [3] Ibid., pp. 4, 5.
[4] "Student's Marx," p. 4. [5] "Capital," p. 6. [6] Ibid.

The whole doctrine of Marx and of Socialism with regard to value is clearly and definitely herein laid down; it is that nothing has any value, whatever its use, which has not labour in it; that the amount of labour decides the amount of value, and that the amount of labour is measured by *time*. Thus it is clear that the gifts of Nature, or of human nature, have normally no value at all; "Nature has nothing to do with it;" hence the later doctrine, "Labour is the only source of wealth."

Marx proceeded with his scientific proofs thus: "It is evident that it is not the exchange of commodities that regulates the magnitude of their value."[1] "The exchange of commodities is evidently an act characterised by a total abstraction from use-values."[2]

Marx has not proved it, and it is not evident. He asserts that "Nature has nothing to do with it," he abstracts use-values and then says "it is evident."

Naturally, if you "abstract" from an article, in considering its value, all the use it has, consequently all the value it has for any one, and also all the part which human nature (in desire and in demand) plays in the exchange, you may at a bound arrive at the discovery that you have "only masses of congealed labour-time;" but it might be difficult to find these congealed masses when you have taken away all that Nature has given, the wood or the marble, and with these all the use-value, and so "see in it no longer a table, a house, yarn, or any other useful thing;" as difficult indeed as to find a market or a customer.

"Nature has nothing to do with it;" use-value is "abstracted," and the congealed mass of labour-time is offered as value in exchange between man and man.

[1] "Student's Marx," p. 11. [2] "Capital," p. 4.

It is a "congelation of homogeneous labour-power,"[1] a "crystal of social substance," which no one would want, and which requires a Marx to see and appreciate. The scientific truth in it is beyond the vanishing-point.

It was not surprising after use-values had been declared intrinsic to commodities that when they were abstracted the commodities themselves should vanish, especially seeing that they were also considered as the commodities themselves, in which case they must necessarily vanish together, and hence that we were instructed no longer to see anything in anything, neither tables as tables nor chairs as chairs, but only labour; but it is surprising after all that to find that exchange-value, which is more or less identified with value (seeing that it is slipped out directly exchange-value appears), is also intrinsic to commodities, particularly as we are told it arises from, and is a consequence of, value, which is quantitative; Marx feels this will be resented, so he faces it boldly, and acknowledges that it "seems a contradiction in terms;" "exchange-value appears to be something accidental and purely relative, and consequently an intrinsic value, *i.e.* that is inseparably connected with, inherent in commodities, seems a contradiction in terms."[2] In order to prove that it is not he says: "Let us consider the matter a little more closely.

"A given commodity, *e.g.* a quarter of wheat, is exchanged for x blacking, y silk, or z gold, &c.—in short, for other commodities in the most different proportions. Instead of one exchange-value the wheat has therefore a great many. But since x blacking, y silk, or z gold, &c., each represent the exchange-value of one quarter of wheat, x blacking, y silk, z

[1] "Capital," p. 5. [2] Ibid., p. 3.

gold, &c., must, as exchange-values, be replaceable by each other, or equal to each other. Therefore, first, the valid exchange-values of a given commodity express something equal; secondly, exchange-value, generally, is only the mode of expression, the phenomenal form of something contained in it, yet distinguishable from it.

"Let us take two commodities, *e.g.* corn and iron. The proportions in which they are exchangeable, whatever those proportions may be, can always be represented by an equation in which a given quantity of corn is equated to some quantity of iron—*e.g.*, 1 qr. of corn $= x$ cwt. iron. What does this equation tell us? It tells us that in two different things—in 1 qr. of corn and x cwt. of iron—there exists, in equal quantities, something common to both. The two things must therefore be equal to a third, which in itself is neither the one nor the other. Each of them, so far as it is exchange-value, must therefore be reducible to this third.

"A simple geometrical illustration will make this clear. In order to calculate and compare the area of rectilinear figures we decompose them into triangles. But the area of the triangle itself is expressed by something totally different from its visible figure, namely, by half the product of the base into the altitude. In the same way the exchange-values of commodities must be capable of being expressed in terms of something common to them all, of which thing they represent a greater or less quantity. This common something cannot either be a geometrical, a chemical, or any other natural property of commodities. Such properties claim our attention only in so far as they affect the utility of those com-

modities, make them use-values. But the exchange of commodities is evidently an act characterised by a total abstraction from use-value. Then one use-value is just as good as another, provided only it be in sufficient quantity. Or as old Barbon says: 'One sort of wares are as good as another if the values be equal. There is no difference or distinction in things of equal value.' . . .

"As use-values, commodities are, above all, of different qualities; but as exchange-values they are merely different quantities, and consequently do not contain an atom of use-value.

"If, then, we leave out of consideration the use-value of commodities, they have only one common property left, that of being products of labour. But even the product of labour itself has undergone a change in our hands. If we make abstraction from its use-value, we make abstraction at the same time from its material elements and shapes that make the product a use-value; we see in it no longer a table, a house, yarn, or any other useful thing. Its existence as a material thing is put out of sight. Neither can it be any longer regarded as the product of the labour of the joiner, the mason, the spinner, or of any other kind of productive labour. Along with the useful qualities of the products themselves we put out of sight both the useful character of the various kinds of labour embodied in them and the concrete forms of that labour; there is nothing left but what is common to them all; all are reduced to one and the same sort of labour, human labour in the abstract.

"Let us now consider the residue of each of these products. It consists of the same unsubstantial reality in each, a mere congelation of homogeneous human

labour, of labour-power expended without regard to the mode of its expenditure. All that these things now tell us is, that human labour has been expended in their production, that human labour is embodied in them. When looked at as crystals of this social substance, common to them all, they are values.

"We have seen that when commodities are exchanged, their exchange-value manifests itself as something totally independent of their use-value. But if we abstract from their use-value, there remains their value as defined above. Therefore the common substance that manifests itself in the exchange-value of commodities whenever they are exchanged, is their value. The progress of our investigation will show that exchange-value is the only form in which the value of commodities can manifest itself or be expressed. For the present, however, we have to consider the nature of value independently of this, its form."[1]

This is Marx's proof that "exchange-value is intrinsic value" is not a contradiction in terms, that it is only a seeming and not a real contradiction; in short, his proof that exchange-value is intrinsic.

Now let us consider the matter a little more closely.

As Marx's values all match with labour, so they all count as either qualitative or quantitative. Quality is an attribute of use-values, for "concrete labour, which creates use-values, counts qualitatively," and "abstract labour, which creates value, counts quantitatively."[2]

"Exchange-value, at first sight, presents itself as a quantitative relation,"[3] but, as he has decided that exchange-value is intrinsic, Marx sees this will not do, although it ought to; for value, which is hidden

[1] "Capital," pp. 3–5. [2] "Student's Marx," p. 5.
[3] "Capital," p. 3.

behind exchange-value, is quantitative; but it will not do, because to make exchange-value intrinsic is paramount, and as a quantitative relation is a shifting one, it would make exchange-value "something accidental and purely relative."[1]

A quantitative relation is "the proportion in which values in use of one sort are exchanged for those of another sort, a relation constantly changing with time and place;"[2] this being so, exchange-value has to be considered as qualitative in order to suit its character of intrinsic, which Marx presumably has made clear in his illustration of the decomposition of rectilinear figures into triangles.

The upshot of the whole is that "the common substance that manifests itself in the exchange-value of commodities whenever they are exchanged is their value."[3]

It was clever of Marx to say *value* and not *labour*. But the reason he did not say labour is clear.

Labour varies in value all over the world, and is constantly varying and fluctuating according to the various conditions of time, place, and circumstance; it has no stable value, *sequitur*, no intrinsic value; consequently it was clever to say value and not labour. But value can only be estimated according to Marx by labour-time, in days, weeks, and hours; therefore the value which manifests itself in exchange is labour measured by time; which, being variable and unstable in value, cannot be intrinsic value.

Marx seems also to have overlooked another trifling consideration with regard to exchange-value. It is this: "qualitatively" is necessary to its being intrinsic, but "abstract labour, which creates value, counts quanti-

[1] "Capital," p. 3. [2] Ibid., p. 3. [3] Ibid., p. 5.

tatively," and it is *this* value which counts quantitatively (and which is measured by labour-*time* and is consequently variable, accidental, and purely relative, which is the cause of exchange-value, and is slipped out to make room for exchange-value) from which alone exchange-value arises; it is not intrinsic, for it counts quantitatively, and, according to Marx's own law, varies with labour-time; yet exchange-value which arises from it is, he says, intrinsic, consequently not quantitative and changing, but qualitative.[1] It is curious that this intrinsic exchange-value, which is the consequence of value, should partake not of the attribute of the value it does arise from but of the attribute of its opposite—use-value—from which it does not arise!

Marx's logic enables him to argue to his own and his followers' satisfaction that intrinsic can, at times and to serve his purposes, be made compatible, even synonymous, with accidental and variable; but his unvarying theory is, that labour and the value of labour is counted by time, and time only. "The labour-time necessary for the production of a commodity, and therefore the amount of abstract labour embodied in the commodity, and therefore the value of the commodity."[2] "The labour-time socially necessary for their production asserts itself as the thing that determines the value of commodities."[3] "The value of the commodity is the amount of abstract human labour embodied in it, and that amount is measured by the average social time required to produce the commodity."[4]

"Concrete labour counts qualitatively in the use-value," does not mean the quality of the labour counts,

[1] "Student's Marx," p. 4.
[2] Ibid., p. 7.
[3] Ibid., p. 16.
[4] Ibid., p. 2.

but that concrete labour counts for something in the quality of utility, in which case, as Marx says, "it is a question of How and What;" but it does not count as the value of the utility it confers, for "abstract labour creates and forms the value of commodities."[1]

If abstract labour is only measured by time, and utility is out of the question, it is clear no *quality* can be recognised in counting its value, and that it cannot be considered qualitatively in any sense This "qualitatively," therefore, Marx only connects with concrete labour, but not with labour as finished labour. Quality does not inhere in it then, only quantity.

Marx will not have anything but the labour of the labourer, the labour that is measured by time; and he particularly defines the labourer as one who is: "1st, free to sell his labour-power for a definite time only; 2nd, free from any other commodity, *i.e.* without any of the means of subsistence;" he will not allow any other kind of labour or labourer, or that value arises from anything or from any one else.

To some persons Marx's two kinds of labour, when "the useful character of the various kinds of labour" has been "put out of sight," when "there is nothing left" but "one and the same sort of labour, human labour in the abstract," look very like one; but if the labour which has been going on is a different sort of labour from—in fact, the contrary of—the labour which is embodied, yet the labour which created utility could scarcely be different from the labour which created value;[2] for if labour were not directed by intelligence,

[1] "Student's Marx," p. 5.

[2] "Value is not an absolute objective thing, a metaphysical substance, a *Ding-an-sich*, as Marx with his sham science virtually represents it to be."—*Flint*, "*Socialism*," p. 147.

it might be very severe labour, but it would not create utility, and therefore no value;[1] so that in saying concrete labour creates utility, and then putting out of sight everything but abstract labour for which he expects to be paid, nay, even to get the whole price, Marx does in fact make his two kinds of labour (in any economic sense) identical, or only prevents them from being so by not allowing that utility has value. But this: it is and it is not, only reveals that his three values are as embarrassing to him as his concrete and abstract labour, his phenomena and noumena; and this embarrassment causes him to treat concrete labour, as we have seen, very badly and ungratefully—in fact, as a sort of Cinderella; for while he makes a different entity of it, and says it creates utility, and it does all the work, he takes all the value and reward away from it and says: abstract labour (which is the labour after all the work has been done) creates the value. He throws the poor thing over as soon as she has done the work; "abstracts" her altogether, and gives all the value to his favourite, "abstract labour." Indeed, he even, while repudiating and abstracting her, takes away her name and says, "Abstract labour is labour" and "concrete labour is work!" And that, too, after saying "concrete labour creates use-values," and "labour in a special form, and with

[1] Marx foresaw this remark, and tried to protect himself by saying that useless labour does not count as labour. "If the thing is useless . . . the labour does not count as labour" ("Capital," p. 8); that is to say, Marx will not count it in his argument because it is inconvenient to him to do so, but he will count it when he wants the capitalist to pay for it, for when the articles are turned out of hand, should they prove to be undemanded, and therefore useless, Marx would not allow that the labourers who produced them ought to refund their wages.

a definite aim is concrete labour, and produces use-values."

Now we all like fair-play, and above all, what is straight; we call a spade a spade, and we stand by it. We do not like hair-splittings and double-shuffles, which have always a purpose to serve, which purpose in this instance is to give labour and the labourer what does not belong to either one or the other; for labour is not the creator of value unconditioned and absolute, and value unconditioned is not and cannot be measured by time. The creator of value is not labour; talent, energy, and genius are the creators of value; such value as does arise from labour by virtue of its material utility as carrier and transferrer, and in serving our material needs, arises only in so far as it is directed, organised, and controlled by talent; whether this talent lie in one who was a labourer and now stands with unlabouring hands as overseer, or in one who is pure talent personified, one who like Edison or Ruskin works or digs with his own hands, if need be, in the carrying out of the design which he, as pure talent, produces for labour pure and simple to execute.

We do not want to abstract anything from labour, or from any part of it; but if anything is to be abstracted, we must confess we have a sneaking kindness for poor "concrete, useful labour," and should like to keep it rather than the other; first, because we like what we can understand, and next, because "labour with a definite aim" is the "character of concrete labour,"[1] and we like this character.

[1] "All labour is the expenditure of human labour-power in a special form and with a definite aim, and in this, its character of concrete useful labour, it produces use-values."—*Capital*, p. 14, Marx.

But let us not imagine we can be saucy and not find Marx lying in wait for us. His flowing robes and long wand reach a long way, and he knows before he sets out that we are going to turn restive. This impressed itself upon him forcibly directly he had shuffled one of his values out of the way—his Cinderella-value—utility; and while he was trying to get rid of another, his third value, by amalgamating it with his second, he saw it would be advisable to get rid of one or two sorts of labour. He had no compunction about one, *i.e.* skilled labour; that was easily blown away by a breath like thistle-down. But there was some little difficulty about concrete labour. She, poor thing, did not like abstraction; she had been so dressed up and taken so much notice of that it was a little troublesome to abstract her, but abstracted she had to be, because she was no longer wanted and it was not possible to pull the Marxian cart through with her in it; thus having transformed his team of values into tandem, Marx struggled hard to get his wheeler well in hand, for he knew his leader, value, might turn round and look him in the face at inconvenient moments. While he was flirting with Abstractions, having turned Concretions out of the cart (finding naturally that he could get on better with Abstractions alone), it occurred to him that some people might think that there was not much science in using the terms "use-value" and "concrete labour," or in bringing them into the question at all, or in inventing them, if they were to be clean abstracted, even to the abstraction along with them of all the valuable and material part supplied by nature; that if it is "abstract labour (the *opposite* of concrete labour) which creates and forms the value of commodities" its quantity measured by time

being that which counts in value, if the attribute or quality of utility which concrete labour helps to supply is to be abstracted before counting value even in Marx's own scientific calculations, science, even Marx's science, could clearly have done very well without use-value and concrete labour; Marx probably thought so himself; but although he could get the whole price for the labourer by way of surplus value if this theory were sound, or by any other of his theories, it was necessary in order to hide their falsity to tangle them up into such a web as might be almost impossible to see through; a show of learning of this sort is dazzling to the average man who, delighted with his Mephisto-Faust instructor, is content to understand very little of the matter in hand and to remain unaware of his own non-comprehension. The agitator sees two prices — one going to the labourer and one to the capitalist—he would like to tell the labourer he ought to have both of them, so Marx prepares a double concoction of labours and values to match the two prices, and having thus netted both values and all the price he abstracts both his concoctions.

Otherwise why prepare and explain use-value and value and then abstract one?

Because two prices must be netted, but when they are netted two values are only in the way.

Why introduce and explain concrete labour and clothe the process in mathematical formulæ when it is to be entirely abstracted?

In order to get the two prices.

Why not count the work of the tailor as the work of a tailor? Why count it as the labour of a labourer?

Because the tailor is a skilled workman, and Marx will have nothing to do with skill; skill is only to count as a multiple of common labour.

And why is skill not to count as something other than common labour?

Because clever, industrious, energetic people would get so much more money than stupid, rough, lethargic, idle people.

Why is the word "qualitatively" to mean the attribute of utility and not the quality of the work?

Because rough labour is to have all the price, and all that arises from refinement or from mind is to be put on the same level as ordinary rough labour, in order to secure *all* the price for labour.

Why are "all kinds of labour equal and equivalent"?[1]

Because none of the price shall by any possibility escape the roughest labourer.

Why does abstract labour, which creates and forms value, count quantitatively?

Because quantitatively means quantity measured by time, and it is only rough or unskilled labour which can be measured by time, consequently all else, as Marx says, must "be reduced to simple unskilled labour,"[2] in order to be measured by time and receive payment accordingly.

Why is the labour, which "forms the substance of value," counted: "as one homogeneous mass of human labour power, composed though it be of innumerable individual units"?[3]

Because each unit shall not receive or be credited with the value which his energy or ability has produced, but only with the same amount (quite irrespective

[1] "Capital," p. 29. [2] "Student's Marx," p. 5.
[3] "Capital," p. 6.

of the merit in his work) as the roughest manual labour.

Why is the character of a commodity said to be "mystical," "enigmatical," "abounding in metaphysical subtleties and theological niceties"?

Because it is necessary by raising a cloud of dust to hide the unsatisfactoriness of the answers given to inconvenient questions.

What scientist, or even ordinary man of common sense, will admit there is anything theological or metaphysical about a coat or its production? that there is anything mystical and enigmatical about chairs and tables? will not see that there must be some illegitimate reason for saying there is, or look with suspicion on the propounder of such statements?

And the reason is not far to seek; for the canon of Marx is: the less labour does or produces in a given time the greater is the value of the article produced, because more time will be required to produce it; thus more pay for the manual labourer and less for skill and talent.

If skill, energy, talent, or genius ever thought they could scramble up somehow into the back of Marx's cart, they are undeceived now. Not if Marx knows it! They have their heads broken for their presumption. They are nowhere. The Socialist cart starts with concrete and abstract labour, Marx being very proud of them both, but it practically arrives with abstract labour alone; to flirt with two at the same time and along such a very stony road being too much even for such a crafty hand.

But notwithstanding all the difficulties of driving tandem and flirting with two, Marx has his eye on us, and before we can say we do not think that idleness, stupidity, and waste of time add to value, has lashed

out with: "a mere congelation of homogeneous human labour." "The labour, however, that forms the substance of value is homogeneous human labour, expenditure of one uniform labour-power. The total labour-power of society, which is embodied in the sum-total of the values of all commodities produced by that society;" and: "each of these units is the same as any other, so far as it has the character of the average labour-power of society, and takes effect as such; that is, so far as it requires for producing a commodity no more time than is needful on an average, no more than is socially necessary."[1]

But his whip is not long enough; we do not mind it. What does it amount to, this average? If one man is idle and stupid, another is quick and bright; the quick and bright man is to be deprived of the earnings of his energy and talent in order that these may be given to the dull and slothful, and the whole body of labourers is to divide equally not only that which was principally produced by the clever and energetic among them, but the *whole* product instead merely of that part of it which was the product of one factor (*i.e.*, labour) in the cost of production. Here I fear Marx's leader, value, turns round and looks him in the face, for he smacks his whip and goes off round the corner to "handloom weaver's yarn," "cloth," and "crystals."

We have seen how Marx has tried to get the whole price for the labourer by various means; here is another device: "Labour is the realisation of labour-power, and results only when the commodity labour-power is consumed."[2] "Labour is an act of the consumption of the commodity labour-power, the realising of its use-value."[3]

[1] "Capital," pp. 5–6. [2] "Student's Marx," p. 39.
[3] Ibid., p. 42.

Never were we more forcibly struck with the adage, "Truth lies hidden at the bottom of a well," than while studying Marx. We have to look such a very long time for it, and alas! we do not always find it. Does no labour result till labour-power is consumed? Is labour-power consumed? Is use consumption? and does no use result until consumption takes place?

Consumption is a very thoroughgoing word. We use our faculties, we do not consume them; if we did not use our faculties at all they would wear out, and wear out much faster than if we used them; but they do not consume by work or labour, nor by anything but disease and death. We develop and increase our labour-power by use every day of our lives; we realise our faculties by work, but does work result only when our faculties are consumed? Using our powers, far from consuming, develops and strengthens them; our labour-power would dwindle were it not used.

It is a fact that the idle, the vagrant, the beggar, those who have never worked, or not worked for a long time, have lost their faculty for work; they have still labour-power, but from disuse it is very difficult to get it to work, it is of little use when exerted, and when exerted the work is not as effective, and is not of the same value, as that of those whose labour-power, the Socialist says, is *consumed* in labouring; if labour-power were consumed in labouring, it is evident, *cæteris paribus*, that the labour-power of the idler, the vagrant, would have increased by not having been used. We all know—it is a fact of daily experience—that the more we work or read the more we can work or read without undue fatigue. Only those who are unaccustomed to such operations find them difficult, fatiguing, and trying. To those who work,

walk, or read constantly, working, walking, or reading are not hurtful; to those who do not they are painful toils. Thus labour-power is increased and strengthened, not consumed, by realising itself in labour.

Even a proportionately larger amount of food is not required by the man who works than by him who does not. Constitution and the air have often as much to do with the quantity of nourishment required as work. There is no necessity to go to the labouring class for examples of this. The sportsman or farmer, and the sedentary or literary man, will serve. A sportsman will walk over the hills for hours at a stretch and not take more food than the man who sits at his desk all day.

It is probable that the man at his desk, being even better fed than the sportsman, could not take that amount of exercise at all, his walking powers from disuse not being developed. The sportsman will probably eat as much during the season in which he does not stalk as during that in which he is on his feet from morning till night. Life has to be fed; work feeds the power of work and does not consume it.

The man who increases his ordinary walk gradually from ten to twenty miles a day will not increase his quantity of food proportionately, and does not consume his walking powers.

Therefore to talk of labour-power being *consumed* by labour is to speak as if part of the very life were gone. The full daily use physical and mental of our powers, even some strain is not detrimental, much less is it consuming; it is conducive to their life and vigour. Therefore Marx's assertion that labour-power is consumed by labouring is as strange as his assertion that labour does not result until the labour-power is consumed, for it results while the power is in its full

vigour. If he had said that labour is consumed, that would have been quite different, but then he would not have got two prices, one for the power and one for the labour. The theory, however, is very useful for what he wants to build upon it.

In order to get double wage for the manual labourer, indeed to get the whole increment, Marx not only invents two sorts of labour and several sorts of value, and the theory that labour-power, in which is embodied past labour, has a right to one wage and labour in the process of "functioning" has a right to another, but also the theory that labour-power is consumed instead of used, thereby confusing use and consumption and use and abuse; he, in fact, makes use and consumption and abuse synonymous, in order to get what he calls surplus value into the position in which he can lay his appropriating hands upon it.

All this effort to make use and consumption identical is to secure for the normal use of labour-power that value which arises from conditions which he ignores, from the exertions other than manual of those without whom it would not arise at all. And in the determination to secure all the price for the labourer he constructs this: "In the labour-power of the labourer past labour is embodied, and there is also a living labour resulting from the consumption of that labour-power." Here again Marx struggles hard to get two labours, two values, two powers out of one. I am truly sorry to have to observe that this labour-power is absolutely useless to the possessor of it, or to any other, unless the past and the living labour are one in one functioning.

The "past labour," which is said to be embodied in the labour-power of the labourer, is of course the labour

which is embodied in the bread and meat, &c., which he and his progenitors have eaten; and this past labour, which was embodied in the bread and meat, and all else which was necessary to the labourer's life, is what Marx calls "crystals," "crystals of the universal social substance," "values," "products of human labour in the abstract;" and you are required to believe, what is assumed, that this past labour has not already been paid for.

If Marx can get you to swallow these "crystals," he has gone a little way towards getting you to swallow some more.

Thus: "There is a daily cost of maintaining labour-power; there is a daily expenditure of labour. The former cost determines the exchange value of the labour-power; the latter cost determines its use-value."[1]

Let us consider this carefully. If there are two costs there are two values. By saying "the former cost" and "the latter cost," Marx means us to think there are two costs, consequently double value.

"The former cost is the daily cost of maintaining," and "determines the exchange value;" and the latter cost—what is the latter cost? Marx himself says it is an *expenditure;* he says a daily cost and a daily expenditure, therefore he means one cost and one expenditure, but he transforms it into: former cost and latter cost; he slips cost into the place of expenditure, thinking you will not remark it, in order to get two costs and two values. For if there are two costs, he thinks his two values and two prices are safe; but if there is only one cost there is only one value. The price of an article normally covers the cost.

The *exertion* of labour-power is what is paid for,

[1] "Student's Marx," p. 46.

and this payment covers the cost of maintaining the labour-power, otherwise the labour-power would not be exerted and no article would be produced. No one would pay to maintain labour-power, and the cost of maintaining it would never be in question, if it were not exerted or expended.

The expenditure of labour, *i.e.*, the exertion of labour-power, is what the labourer gives in return for wages; it is not a second (a "latter") cost; he does not give two articles; he exerts his labour-power for those who will give him the cost of maintaining it. If the Socialist disciples of Marx were asked to pay the "former cost," that of maintaining labour-power which was not to be exerted, they would not do so, on the ground that they received nothing to pay for; they would only recognise what Marx calls "the latter cost," the expenditure of labour-power; they emphatically state that under Socialism those who will not work shall starve, that no charity shall be extended to them,[1] which makes it quite clear that they have no intention of paying for the maintenance of unexerted labour-power, of paying "a former cost" and "a latter cost," yet they want non-Socialists to do this.

Marx, trying to make you believe that there are two costs instead of one, uses the word expenditure instead of exertion, as being more easily replaced by the word cost, inasmuch as changing the word expenditure for cost is less likely to be observed than if the word cost were substituted for "exertion;" in fact, if he had used the word exertion he could not have made the change at all, for the former cost and the latter cost could not have been made to represent daily cost and daily exertion. This will be apparent if we substitute expenditure for cost in the first part of the sentence, or exertion for

[1] "Fabian Essays."

expenditure in the second part, thus: there is a daily expenditure in maintaining labour-power, and there is a daily expenditure of labour-power; but it would not suit Marx to say this, for it would be immediately perceived that the one expenditure is of money received, the other of labour given in return; and that the expenditure of the money is the equivalent of, and the price that is paid for, the expenditure of the labour, one balancing the other; that would be fatal to Marx, so he does not say it; he does not want to show that there is an equivalent given; he wants, on the contrary, to show that there are two costs, and that the labour-power is not paid for at all, otherwise he would not get his "*therefore*" which follows. So the cards must be arranged and shuffled thus: "There is a daily cost . . . there is a daily expenditure. . . . The former cost determines the exchange value of the labour-power; the latter cost determines its use-value. Therefore the value of the labour-power is one thing and the value it creates in the labour-process is another."[1]

Now it is clear that if he had not thus made two costs he could not have got his two values—the value of the labour-power and the value it creates; and not having two values he could not spring to: "The essence of the whole transaction is that labour-power is the source, not only of value, but of more value than the labour-power has itself."[2]

That is what he wanted to arrive at; he thought you would not see how it was done; he slipped in the word "former" in order to slip in the two words "latter cost"; and he thinks you will not see that there are not two costs, but only one cost! And having thus obtained his two costs, he arrives, as he would have us believe, at two values!

[1] "Student's Marx," p. 46. [2] Ibid.

This trick is done, but it would not say much for ordinary intelligence if it had succeeded.

The fraudulent tradesman will slip the same article twice into a bill under a slightly different name and thus charge twice for the same thing, hoping it will not be noticed; the wording of items therefore must be carefully looked at or we may find we are cheated.

Now, if we look closely at these two items, "the value of the labour-power" and "the value it creates," we shall find that these two values are identical—that they are one, and not two.

Let us ask: What value has labour-power for any one if it is not exerted? "The labour-power," which Marx says is "past labour embodied," is only of value when it is put to use. The past labour has been already paid for or it would not have been exerted; will any Socialist pay anything for this past labour unless it becomes "living labour?" unless it is exerted?

If Marx (or any of our Socialist friends) engaged a good strong labourer with as much labour-power in him as in ten other men, we venture to say he would not pay one sixpence for it if he did not exert it in some useful way, and that he would pay only for the exertion of it, for the "value it creates," which might be just the same value after all as the labour of a man who had only ordinary labour-power; he would not pay for the extra labour-power that was in that man; it would have no value for him unless it were exerted.

If he had two men carrying chairs from this house to that and each carried fifty, he would pay them the same; and if one of the men told him he could have carried five hundred in the time he had taken to carry fifty, Marx would not pay for the carrying of five hundred chairs, although he might not doubt that

the man was quite equal to doing as he said. He would not pay for the "past labour embodied" in that man, but only for the exertion of as much as was necessary to carry fifty chairs. He would refuse to pay twice, once for the "labour-power" and once for carrying the chairs, the "labour-process." And yet that is what he says we ought to do, because "the value of the labour-power is one thing, and the value it creates in the labour-process is another thing." Marx thinks this will pass by using mathematical formulæ and saying that labour is not identical with labour-power; that you will be blind to the fact that labour is nothing but labour-power *exerted*, that it is only this exertion that any man, even Marx himself, will pay for; so he puts two items into your bill which are clearly only one, *i.e.*, the *exertion* of labour-power. It was in order to do this, to make you pay twice over for one thing, that he maintained that labour-power was *consumed;* he tries to attach one value to labour-power and another to the exertion of it where the non-Socialist is concerned and so makes two items of one, although there is only one value to the purchaser, or, for the matter of that, to the seller, *i.e.*, the value of the power when used.

A sovereign is useful to me if I use it, but if I bury it it is no use although it has the purchasing power of a pound. If I dig it up and use it it has not two values, nor the value of two pounds, because the purchasing-power embodied in it is put to use.

Now Marx's doctrine makes out that it has; it has first the purchasing-*power* of one pound, in Marxian phraseology past labour is embodied in it to that amount, and secondly there is the realisation of that power when you dig it up and put it to use. That makes two values, two pounds.

It is thus Marx arrives at his desired deduction that: "The essence of the whole transaction is that labour-power is the source, not only of value, but of more value than the labour-power has itself." But it is obvious that it has no more value than the sovereign has more value in *use* than its purchasing *power* of one pound which it had when it was lying buried. Labour-power has no value except in so far as it is of use when exerting itself; it has the value of what it creates and no more; the value of it is the value of that of which it is the source.

Marx goes on to say: "the labourer (*a*) transfers the value of *mp.*[1] and (*b*) adds new value. He does the former (*a*) by virtue of his particular kind of labour (spinning, weaving, &c.); he does the latter (*b*) by virtue of his labour being also labour in the abstract and functioning for a certain time. By the quality of his labour he transfers the value of *mp.* By the quantity of his labour he adds new value."[2]

What new value is this? It is the value of the transference of the *mp*, *e.g.* of the coal from the mine to the coal-cellar. What new value is there added besides this transference? That which has to be paid for is the functioning which has brought the coal from one place to another. Is there anything else? The new value we are told is the value of "labour being also labour in the abstract" and "functioning." But the transference was the functioning; how could the value of *mp* have been transferred if the labour-power had not functioned? What new value was *added* after the transference, or apart from the functioning? The new value was what the transference, the functioning, produced; Marx treats it as if the spinning, the trans-

[1] *Mp.* stands for means of production.
[2] "Student's Marx," p. 49.

ference of the value of *mp*, were one thing and labour in the abstract and functioning another; he does this again by means of his "former and latter," the former, *i.e.* the transference of value which the functioning effected, the spinning which transferred the value; and the latter? well, to have any "latter" at all he charges the same article twice over, calling it in the first instance (*a*) transference (spinning or weaving), and in the second (*b*) "labour in the abstract and functioning."

Instead then of saying, with Marx, "the labourer (*a*) transfers the value of *mp* and (*b*) adds new value" we say: the labourer transfers the value of *mp* and this transference is the new value. In this case, however, we have only one value, there is no possibility of two values, and Marx must have two, for he has nothing else whereon to base his claim for his two prices, two prices for the labourer. The question here is clearly not at all the employer's profit but what he is to pay for certain articles—viz., labour-power and labour-functioning; he is not to pay according to value produced, that is not in the bargain, nor is there a trace of such an idea in Marx. Whether anything useful or valuable results from labour-power and functioning clearly depends not on the labourer who has sold his power, but upon the purchaser of the power who sets it to work; if the employer makes mistakes and sets the labourer to unremunerative work, as often happens, the loss does not fall on the labourer but on the master who sets it to work. But two prices, Marx says, have to be paid no matter how much or how little has been produced; for: "A working-day of given length produces the same amount of value, no matter how productiveness may vary."[1] Marx never for one instant

[1] "Student's Marx," p. 112.

postulates that the price to be paid for anything is regulated by the value the article has for the employer or the consumer;[1] his theory is that the price is to be entirely regulated by the value of the labour embodied measured by time; the labour-power is to be paid for, and the transference of value is to be paid for, but as altogether separate in value from, and in addition to, the labour-power.

Now, it is possible if Marx had thought this would have commended itself to the intelligence of mankind he would have been satisfied to stop here seeing that, having thus procured for the labourer two prices for the one service labour renders, the whole amount the consumer pays would go into the labourer's pocket and none of it into the capitalist's, and that consequently it would not have been necessary to have constructed another theory, since there would be no more money to apportion; it can therefore only be supposed that he knew that common sense would not accept the transference of value as one service, and "labour in the abstract and functioning" as another; that it would with contempt assert that it was not true that there were two services or two values rendered; that indeed only persons who were intent upon appropriating the whole price of an article would accept such doctrine and profess to believe it; we are justified in supposing this, seeing that he proceeded to invent another (and for his purpose otherwise quite superfluous) theory which would equally well help the labourer to the whole value. This work of supererogation was his crowning theory of surplus value and surplus labour-time.

The capitalist must not be allowed to put in his

[1] ". . . The value it (labour-power) produces depends, not on its own value, but on the length of time it is in action."—*Capital.*

pocket anything more than the cost of production; in fact, he must not have anything at all for himself because he does not labour; so Marx, to make it impossible for him to get more, and in order to secure all the price for the labourer, declares that it is only necessary for a man to labour six hours a day to maintain himself and family, and that all the time he labours over and above six hours is *surplus time* in which he produces surplus value, which *surplus value* belongs to himself by right; that this it is which he is at present compelled by the capitalist to give for nothing, and that it is from this the capitalist obtains all that he receives over and above the cost price.

"We assumed . . . that the value of a day's labour-power is three shillings and that six hours' labour are incorporated in that time; and consequently that this amount of labour is requisite to produce the necessaries of life daily required on an average by the labourer."[1]

These are, as we see, merely assumptions, and as assumptions they might pass for whatever they were worth; but Marx, without assigning any reason, soon turns these assumptions into facts, or rather treats them as proven facts and builds upon them a fabric essential to his theory:—

"The owner of the money has paid the value of a day's labour-power. . . . The circumstance, that on the one hand the daily sustenance of labour-power costs only half a day's labour, while on the other hand the very same labour-power can work during a whole day, that consequently the value which its use during one day creates is double what he pays for that use, this circumstance is, without doubt, a good piece of luck for the buyer."[2]

[1] "Capital," p. 171. [2] Ibid., p. 175.

Here we see the several assumptions transformed boldly into facts.

"The labourer finds, in the workshop, the means of production necessary for working, not only during six, but during twelve hours. Just as during the six hours' process our ten pounds of cotton absorbed six hours' labour, and became ten pounds of yarn; so now twenty pounds of cotton will absorb twelve hours' labour and be changed into twenty pounds of yarn. . . . The sum of the values of the commodities that entered into the process amounts to twenty-seven shillings. The value of the yarn is thirty shillings. Therefore the value of the product is one-ninth greater than the value advanced for its production; twenty-seven shillings have been transformed into thirty shillings; a surplus value of three shillings has been created. If now we compare the two processes of producing value and of creating surplus value, we see that the latter is nothing but the continuation of the former beyond a definite point. . . . Surplus value results only from a quantitative excess of labour, from a lengthening out of one and the same labour process."[1]

I have here only quoted such portions of the text as show *where* Marx gets his surplus value from and not such as show *how* he gets it. As has been seen, he treats his unproven idea that six hours' labour is sufficient for a man's maintenance into a proven fact; next he says that the labour which the labourer yields is double the value which the employer pays for it—a second unproven fact; and then that out of this double value (half of it only having been paid for) the capitalist gets his surplus value, because the process only cost him twenty-seven shillings, and the value of the product is thirty shillings, which

[1] "Capital," p. 76.

statement is a third unproven idea, a fallacious assumption. Nor has he proved nor shown the means whereby the capitalist compels or induces the labourer to give twelve hours when he is really only paid for six, but he summarises the situation thus: "We know from what has gone before that the labour process may continue beyond the time necessary to reproduce and incorporate in the product a mere equivalent for the value of labour-power. Instead of the six hours that are sufficient for the latter purpose, the process may continue for twelve hours. The action of the labour-power, therefore, not only reproduces its own value, but produces value over and above it. The surplus value is the difference between the value of the product and the value of the elements consumed in the formation of that product, in other words, of the means of production and the labour-power."[1]

"The labourer therefore finds in the workshop the means of production necessary for working not only during six, but during twelve hours' labour;" so that if a capitalist engaged a man for three shillings a day —the old-fashioned day of twelve hours—he robbed him of six hours, and compelled him to work twice as long as he was paid to work.

I believe it has never yet been discovered why six hours is the right time for a man to labour, or why it is necessary for him to work six hours, neither more nor less, for his maintenance. The law of nature regulating this revealed itself to Marx alone, nor did he reveal it to any one; he merely stated that it was so. Unfortunately here again for his science his disciples seem to have found a conflicting, or modified, law of Nature, for many, indeed most, Socialists think that

[1] "Capital," p. 191.

four hours' work is more than sufficient for a man's maintenance, many putting it at less than two hours, while the Fabians think it would probably under Socialism be eight hours.

Marx having affirmed that the capitalist compels the labourer to work surplus labour-time, says: "Surplus value depends entirely upon the mass of labour that is set in motion." "The mass of constant capital employed does not count in the creation of surplus value."[1]

This was only to be expected and is merely a logical sequence, for if labour is the source of value, capital, no matter of what kind, could not count in the creation of surplus value.

Therefore if the former "crystals" and congelations were swallowed this must be swallowed also; although, as before stated, if the other Marxian theories of value and labour had been sound this theory of surplus value would not be necessary. Marx, however, evidently mistrustful of his other theories, did not consider it superfluous.

And he divides capital primarily into variable and constant—constant capital comprising "fixed capital." "The part of capital represented by labour-power (from which surplus value can arise) is variable capital." Constant capital consists of "buildings, machinery, &c." which is "fixed capital," and of "raw material" which "is circulating capital."[2] Thus, whatever the amount of capital which is devoted to production, the only part of it from which any profit arises is that part which is paid in wages, *i.e.*, variable capital.

Hence larger amounts of iron or cotton can yield no surplus value, nor can improved machinery. Indeed, in

[1] "Student's Marx," p. 67. [2] Ibid., p. 50.

the case of improved machinery the profits would be lessened, inasmuch as improved machinery means less labour and consequently diminution of surplus value.

How is it, then, that the capitalist, to whom at present all Marx's surplus value accrues, increases his machinery and strives to lessen the amount of labour? If his surplus value comes entirely out of labour why does he seek to employ less labour?

Further, Marx says: "Surplus value cannot be created by the simple circulation of commodities,"[1] nor by exchange, whether the exchange be of equivalents or non-equivalents; in either case, "there is no alteration of value, no creation of surplus value."[2] . . . "The seller who has gained or lost say 10 per cent. now becomes in his turn a buyer, and straightway loses or gains that 10 per cent.; the final result is as if all had exchanged equivalents, and there is no creation of surplus value."[3]

"Suppose then, by some inexplicable privilege, the seller is enabled to sell his commodities above their value, what is worth 100 for 110, in which case the price is nominally raised 10 per cent. The seller therefore pockets a surplus of 10. But after he has sold he becomes a buyer. A third owner of commodities comes to him now as a seller, who in this capacity also enjoys the privilege of selling his commodities 10 per cent. too dear. Our friend gained 10 per cent. as a seller only to lose it again as a buyer. The net result is that all owners of commodities sell their goods to one another at 10 per cent. above their value, which comes precisely to the same thing as if they sold them at their true values.

"Let us make the opposite assumption, that the buyer has the privilege of purchasing commodities under their

[1] "Student's Marx," p. 89. [2] Ibid., p. 35. [3] Ibid., p. 67.

value. In this case it is no longer necessary to bear in mind that he in his turn will become a seller. He was so before he became a buyer; he had already lost 10 per cent. in selling before he gained 10 per cent. as a buyer."[1]

This is very acute of Marx. The capitalist-producer sells, *e.g.*, a ton of iron at a profit of 10 per cent. and buys 1000 hats; the hatter also makes a profit of 10 per cent., so the seller of the iron and buyer of the hats has clearly gained nothing. It is only a pity Marx was not acute enough to see that this is not what does occur, and that no one will think it does. He is rather afraid no one will. So he assumes again.

"Assume" (it is a better assumption) "that surplus value is paid by the consumer of commodities, but the consumer either is or represents a producer, and the case is therefore the same as the one first considered."[2]

Not quite, for the whole of the previous example shows that the former capitalists exchanging were not in the position of consumer and producer but were all producers, whereas in the last example it is a consumer who is spoken of who is "also" a producer; so the case is not quite the same, for the whole question really turns in the last resort, as we shall see, upon consumer as opposed to producer.

"To assert that the surplus value acquired by the producer has its origin in the fact that consumers pay for commodities more than their value is only to say in other words: The owner of commodities possesses, as a seller, the privilege of selling too dear. The seller has himself produced the commodities or represents their producer; but the buyer has to no less extent produced

[1] "Capital," p. 139. [2] "Student's Marx," p. 36.

the commodities represented by his money or represents their producer. The distinction between them is that one buys and the other sells. The fact that the owner of the commodities, under the designation of producer, sells them over their value, and under the designation of consumer pays too much for them, does not carry us a single step further."[1]

Here we have undisguised misrepresentation and misstatement of fact. The buyer has not necessarily to any extent, howsoever small, produced any commodities whatsoever. Scholars, scientists, musicians, travellers, and numerous other classes of individuals produce no commodities at all, nor do they, if they earn their living in the way such classes do earn it, represent any producer of commodities whatsoever. Marx tries here to do with consumer and producer exactly what he did with his different kinds of labour and values, *i.e.* to shuffle them into one.

The question here is C—M—C or M—C—M., viz., commodities and money, and of consumer *quâ* consumer and producer *quâ* producer; but finding himself in a difficulty Marx tries to struggle out of it by obliterating the consumer and saying, "Well, after all, he is a producer!"

We are supposed not to see the sleight-of-hand; but we do, and we demand adherence to facts.

Marx foresees this, so he tries a third time, and improves a little at the beginning, thus: "Assume the existence of a class that only buys and does not sell" (this is deliciously nonchalant, all those masses of mankind who do not produce material goods are a *class*), "only consumes and does not produce. The existence of such a class is inexplicable from the standpoint

[1] "Capital," p. 140.

we have so far reached, viz., that of simple circulation. But let us anticipate. The money with which such a class is constantly making purchases must constantly flow into their pockets, without any exchange, gratis, by might or right, from the pockets of the commodity-owners themselves. To sell commodities above their value to such a class is only to crib back a part of the money previously given to it."[1]

"O most lame and impotent conclusion!" What has a previous debt, if there is one, to do with the source of surplus value? And how very convenient to assume that the money with which these purchases are made "flows into the pockets of the purchasers," and "flows" there from the pockets of the sellers of those commodities! And how very scientific to place this assumption in the position of proven truth and base a theory upon it, and assume this also to be thus proven! Moreover the thinking seems extraordinarily loose and inexact; for the statement is that the class that only buys and does not sell, *i.e.* the rich, is supplied with its money by the *commodity owner*, *i.e.* the capitalist, also, according to Marx, the rich man, "Mr. Moneybags." Marx of course does not mean to say that one rich man supplies another with money; he means to insinuate, and indeed maintains, that it is the poor, the wage-earners, the labourers, who pour money into the rich man's pocket. Naturally he thinks anything of this sort will pass if his crystals and congelations were swallowed. Here he is trying to pin his brains and ours to a "still unsolved problem," and he introduces as a scientific truth the irrelevant assumption that some buyers owe some sellers some money, and deduces therefrom his equally scientific *sequitur!* Surely a sample

[1] "Capital," p. 140.

of the "close and powerful argument" of a great logician!

"What then is surplus value?

"Not in formulæ 1–4. In all the transactions represented by the formulæ (1) $xA = yB$; (2) $xA = yB = zC = \&c.$;

$$(3)\ \left.\begin{matrix} yB \\ vC \\ xD \end{matrix}\right\} \text{each} = zA;$$

(4) C—M—C—there is an exchange of equivalents. There is no alteration of value, no creation of surplus value."[1]

To make this clear the following must be read in connection with it:—

"A's bodily form in the equation $xA = yB$ only figures as use-value; B's bodily form in the equation $xA = yB$ only figures as the form of value; so that the internal opposition within any commodity of use-value and value is, in the equation $xA = yB$, represented by an internal opposition—that of A and B. And in this, A, whose value is to be expressed, only appears as use-value; whilst B, in terms of which the value A is to be expressed, only appears as exchange-value."[2]

C—M—C′ means: "a commodity turned into money, this money reconverted into another commodity." C—M—C′ therefore means the exchange of commodities.

It is to be hoped that this mathematical demonstration makes it clearer that there is no creation of surplus value in exchange. Marx of course felt that his effort, even backed up by scientific formulæ, to prove that no surplus value (*i.e.* profit) could arise in exchange because the sellers had previously given the buyers their

[1] "Student's Marx," p. 35. [2] Ibid., p. 10.

money, would not be considered satisfactory, so he tried again.

"Assume that the seller gets the better of the bargain with the buyer; but the total amount of value is just the same as before, although the distribution may be changed."[1]

"Let us therefore keep within the bounds of exchange, where sellers are also buyers and buyers sellers. Our difficulty may perhaps have arisen from treating the actors as personifications instead of as individuals.

"A may be clever enough to get the advantage of B or C without their being able to retaliate. A sells wine worth £40 to B and obtains from him in exchange corn to the value of £50. A has converted his £40 into £50, has made more money out of less, and has converted his commodities into capital. Let us examine this a little more closely. Before the exchange we had £40 worth of wine in the hands of A, £50 worth of corn in those of B, a total value of £90. After the exchange we have still the same total value of £90. The value in circulation has not increased by one iota, it is only distributed differently between A and B. What is loss of value to B is surplus value to A; what is '*minus*' to one is '*plus*' to the other. The same change would have taken place if A, without the formality of an exchange, had directly stolen the £10 from B."[2]

It is strange that poor Marx never could see in this question more than two people; he must have been number-blind. Of course he was fully alive to the presence of other people when he wanted them, but when treating of "surplus value" we hear practically only of two capitalist-producers, or only of a pro-

[1] "Student's Marx," p. 36. [2] "Capital," p. 141.

ducer and a consumer. If he has to notice others, either "their existence is inexplicable," or they "shove themselves in."

Nor could he discover that they ever did anything but exchange equal quantities of labour as represented by equivalents of commodities and money, or commodities and commodities representing money; nor that A, B, or C, seeing that the £10 they gained in selling they lost in buying, ever made any profit, acquired any value over and above that which they started with, without cheating each other, or cheating persons who might or "might not be able to retaliate;" nor could he ever see that persons who paid for the articles they purchased 10 or 20 per cent. more than the cost of production were fully aware they were doing so, and were quite willing, nay, even anxious to do so; nor could he understand why they were willing to pay more than the cost of production. All these things were hidden from Marx. He could not see that a capitalist who sold a ton of iron did not buy of a third capitalist 1000 hats; that A who sold £500 worth of corn to B did not buy of B £500 worth of wine.

He tries to get us to look at things as if there were only a certain fixed amount of capital or money or commodities in a certain fixed and circumscribed area within which two or three producers and consumers were exchanging, and into which no more than it usually contained could flow, and from which only that original amount could come out; on the one side a well full of money, and a well on the other side full of commodities with exchangers in the midst trying to get more than their fair share by cheating one another; "*minus*" to some being "*plus*" to others, all imagining that this "*plus*" could not derive without cheating.

"The same change would have taken place if A, without the formality of an exchange, had directly stolen the £10 from B," Marx says.

He wanted us not to see that this is not at all like life and commerce, and not at all what takes place anywhere. Does the butcher who supplies me with £2 worth of meat a week buy £2 worth of tobacco of me? Does A, who sells £5000 worth of corn to B, buy £5000 worth of wine of B? or does he sell £5000 worth of corn to B and buy £5000 worth of clothes from C?

It may not be quite easy to perceive that this is not at all what happens when the smaller figures which Marx craftily selects are placed before the casual reader. The £3 which is received by Marx's seller of corn may be easily spent in clothes, or even the £50 may be possibly spent for wine with the wine merchant who bought the corn; but although it may not be so easily seen through it is none the less an untrue representation of commerce.

Whether the corn merchant derives from his sales £3, £50, £500, or £5000 is a matter which depends entirely upon the extent of his business, but the process is the same in each, or in any, case. We may suppose he makes the 10 per cent. Marx postulates, but whether he receives as the result of each sale £5000 or £3 he does not necessarily spend that amount in purchasing commodities which the buyer of the corn has produced, nor in purchasing any other commodity for personal use or consumption. The corn merchant whose sales may be represented by £3 or £50 will probably not buy wine at all; and he whose sales £5000 represent will certainly not spend £5000 on wine.

What then is it that really does happen? The corn merchant selling his £3 or £50 or £5000 worth of corn

spends a certain small proportion in domestic necessities and another certain small proportion in business necessities, and the rest (and that as large a portion as he can possibly make it) he sets aside as capital, throws it again into circulation, buys more of the same commodity (not wine or any other article than corn if he is a corn merchant) to sell again, and so keeps turning his money over and over, always making new purchases of corn and new sales of corn (not, as Marx says, sales of corn and purchases of wine); always on each sale using his receipts, his original capital *plus* his 10 per cent. surplus value or profit (after a certain small deduction for personal and trade expenses) for purchasing more corn. He may have begun with only £3 or only with £40, but he always spends less as income than his receipts, not, as Marx says, the whole on clothes or wine. Thus, if he has a capital of £5000, if, that is to say, he sells £5000 worth of corn, he does not buy £5000 worth of wine, nor necessarily anything else from his customer who bought the corn, but if this £5000 represents, *e.g.*, one year's receipts he will spend, *e.g.*, £1000 on himself and his business and with the other £4000 he will buy more corn which he will sell again at a profit, thus withdrawing £4000 *plus* 10 per cent., and every time he makes a purchase and a sale he will get back the sum he spent *plus* 10 per cent.; and the more energy and ability he has in finding the best corn and the best customers and the best way to suit them, the more he will sell and the more often he will turn his capital over and withdraw the ever-increasing amount with an added 10 per cent. He does not necessarily increase his home expenditure, nor proportionately his business expenditure; he still abstracts as little as possible for these purposes; his object is to

buy and sell as much corn as possible and as often as possible, in order to add as often as possible 10 per cent. to his thus ever-increasing capital.

This continual selling at a price above that which he paid is how he obtains his surplus value, and it is not at all the process which Marx in many long pages explains. If A sold £5000 worth of corn to B and bought of him or of C £5000 worth of wine, there would, as Marx says, be merely a gain of 10 per cent. and a loss of 10 per cent.; but the corn merchant never buys wine at all out of his capital, only (if he drinks wine) out of that portion of his income which is not capital.

And if he did buy corn and then wine and then iron, if, in short, he dealt in everything instead of being a corn or a wine merchant, the process and the result would be the same; the wine and the iron bought with the money received for the corn would not be consumed personally and thus the process be complete, as Marx says, with a gain and a loss; there is no circuit to complete in the matter, as Marx postulates. The merchant buys and sells and continues buying and selling, and although each time he buys he pays 10 per cent. more than the cost of production, he himself receives 10 per cent. more than what he gave, and he gets this 10 per cent. more than what he gave every time he sells, even if he sells every hour in the day; he gets his 10 per cent. over and above what he paid as often as ever he likes to sell; and although he pays 20 per cent. or more over and above the cost of production for all the articles he buys as consumer, this 20 per cent. not only does not come out of his capital, that portion of his possessions with which he works his business, but out of the comparatively very small portion he has set aside from the

profits, the surplus value he has already earned, not at all out of any original sum with which he started as capitalist.

The surplus value accruing from sales is not necessarily, as Marx says, capital; whether it will be capital depends on the use the corn merchant makes of it; he will probably draw his income from a part of it. If he spends it all on pleasures or on his domestic establishment, as many imprudent capitalists do, it will not be capital; if he re-invests it in corn or commodities to sell again, it will be capital.

"The value originally advanced, therefore, not only remains intact while in circulation, but adds to itself a surplus value or expands itself. It is this movement that converts it into capital."[1]

Here are two false statements; one: that value *expands itself;* the other, that this movement converts it into capital. It does nothing of the sort; and value does not expand itself; if the merchant is not skilful and energetic, not only does value not expand but "the value originally advanced" does not remain intact for him.

Marx wishes us to believe that the capitalist, or any one except the labourer, acquiring surplus value "cribs" it: "he lets the money go, but only with the sly intention of getting it back again."[2]

Observe the "sly."

The *movement*, however, is caused by the capitalist, not by the value.

We have here a series of unproven and untrue statements, first: that all surplus value arises from surplus labour, labour which the capitalist has stolen; then that value expands itself automatically, and that this auto-

[1] "Capital," p. 128. [2] Ibid., p. 126.

matic expansion is surplus value: "the original value, in other words, expands spontaneously. For the movement in the course of which it adds surplus value is its own movement; its expansion therefore is automatic expansion."[1] Any falsity, any absurdity, to get people to believe that it is not the ability, energy, or self-restraint, or all combined, of the capitalist which expands value or causes it to increase to him until capital becomes such a possession as turns the merchant into the person Marx kindly calls "Mr. Moneybags."

When Marx accounts for the capitalist's "profit by simple cheating, by buying under and selling over the value,"[2] he clearly contradicts and annihilates his theory of "automatic expansion;" it can only be supposed that he again here, knowing that he would get no one to believe in automatic expansion of value, men being too well acquainted practically with the nature and source of profits, he found it advisable to fall back upon stolen surplus labour and declare that "he" (the capitalist) "never comes to see that if such a thing as the value of labour really existed, and he really paid this value, no capital would exist; his money would not be turned into capital."[3]

But in spite of this it is urged that this continual 10 per cent. which is a gain to the merchant must be some one else's loss; let us look at this closely.

The meat which the butcher sells at ninepence he bought from the farmer at sixpence; sixpence then represents the cost of production. If the labourer has been defrauded, the butcher has evidently nothing to do with the fraud, which must have lurked, if there were any, in the sixpence the farmer received; it is not to be

[1] "Capital," p. 132. [2] Ibid., p. 552. [3] Ibid., p. 552.

imagined that the farmer would give the butcher the benefit of his fraudulent gains.

The butcher then gets, *e.g.*, ninety shillings the cwt. for that which only cost him sixty, clearly thirty shillings surplus value on every cwt.; where does this surplus value come from? whom does the butcher defraud? and does any one give the persons who pay him this surplus value the wherewithal to pay it, as Marx alleges? The surplus clearly comes from the butcher's customers; they are not cheated, as Marx alleges, for they know the butcher paid a good deal less than they give. Does the labourer give these customers in any form whatsoever the surplus they give the butcher?

Some of these are the "consumers who are also producers," the men who sell the tea, sugar, beer, and similar articles to the labourer, for which they get the labourer's money, and therewithal a similar proportional amount of surplus value; but this surplus value arises from their own ability and energy in supplying the demands of the public generally. Then does it amount to what Marx says—that the money to buy of the butcher flows out of the producer-labourer's pocket into the consumer's pocket?

No, and for several reasons. First, because surplus value which accrues to the shopkeeper as the result of his industry, experience, and skill are just as much due to him for these as the wages of the labourer are due to him for labour; next, because society does not consist of two undifferentiated masses—producer of material articles for consumption and consumer—but of various and innumerable individuals who are not all either manufacturing and agricultural producers or consumers; and thirdly, because these do not all draw their incomes either directly or indirectly from the use they make of

commodities which the labourer has helped to produce; and fourthly, because the mass of commodities which are capital equally with money are not surrounded by an iron wall of circumvallation, nor do riches or possessions consist of money alone. Marx affirms that every consumer who is not a producer draws the means wherewith he purchases material productions from the producers of those articles, because wealth or surplus value can only arise from labour. But the scientist, artist, or poet does not derive the reward of his genius from the labourer; the labour of the labourer has nothing to do with it, not even in the most indirect form which Marx calls past, embodied, or dead labour; for bread and meat do not make genius, otherwise the labourer himself and each one of us would be a genius. Therefore the labourer has nothing at all to do with the production of anything whatever other than labour; the artist's or inventor's income which his talent produces does not even in the remotest sense or degree arise from the labour of the labourer. He ate, it is true, and was clothed and housed before his talent produced anything, but that food, clothing, and habitation were paid for by those by whom he was reared and nourished, probably by an artist, poet, or inventor preceding him; and Marx could not formulate so gross an absurdity in plain language, although he struggles to get it inferred, as to say in so many words that the labour of the labourer, even ever so indirectly, was the producer of genius. But the labouring classes are made to believe "that they are now the tools of the other classes and yet worth all the rest."[1]

The labourer, then, has nothing whatever to do with the production of the income with which the artist,

[1] Dr. Bonar, "Philosophical and Political Economy," p. 353.

scientist, or man of talent, or of any official whatsoever spends on the commodities he buys; it matters not whether the physician, the inventor, the author, or the gambler is the purchaser of art-treasures, or is the remunerator of the services of able men; it is not from what the labourer has produced that these purchasers derive their incomes. Nor are we indebted to the labourer for such satisfactions, nor for those which have gone before, for all that was due to him has been paid; those for which we have not paid, can never pay, for which we must always remain indebted whatever amount may have been paid, are the products of talent; this, and this only, is a heritable debt which goes on from generation to generation; it is one from which none of us ever desires to escape, because the benefit is increasingly precious, and is as substantial and invaluable to us as it was to those who first enjoyed it.

But to return to the tradesman—is his gain his customer's loss? Does a man sustain a loss when he eats his dinner? Would he not regard any one as a lunatic who said he was sustaining a loss? If he thought it well to answer a fool in his folly he would tell him he was a decided gainer although some of his money went to the butcher or owner of the restaurant. When he wears the new clothes he ordered is he sustaining a loss? Are his clothes and his food a loss or a gain to him? The tradesman gained surplus value, but was this payment of surplus value a loss to the man who was fed and clothed? It was not; for he received what was to him as valuable as what he gave.[1]

We must talk common-sense even, and especially, in

[1] Professor Flint says: "The economic doctrine of Social Democracy is thoroughly anti-scientific wherever it is peculiar and distinctive."—*Socialism*, p. 327.

economics, and not rubbish such as Marx talks about "spontaneous generation," and commodities being "inwardly circumcised Jews."

"The capitalist knows that all commodities, however scurvy they may look, or however badly they may smell, are in faith and in truth money, inwardly circumcised Jews."[1]

This brilliantly spiteful sally really does credit to this master-mind.

As a matter of fact we are not losers when we buy food and clothes or obtain any other satisfaction of our desires although we do give what is over and above the cost of production, and we are decidedly gainers although our money has gone into the tradesman's pocket as surplus value.

Then the buyer, if he does not buy to consume personally, buys to sell again; yet he is not strictly speaking a producer nor is he a consumer of the goods he buys. It is extraordinary that poor, simple Marx never thought of all those persons—merchants, tradesmen, commercial travellers, middlemen of all sorts—who are neither producers nor consumers in their capacity of supplying the wants of those who cannot go straight to the producer. If he had remembered these for the practical purposes of his argument, instead of merely to denounce them, he would not have found so much difficulty in solving the problem of surplus value; yet all the transactions of commerce are carried on by those who are neither producers nor consumers.

Marx, however, felt he must recognise that there were others than consumer and producer, although he was determined not to discuss the matter of surplus value in connection with them; he says, "It would appear that

[1] "Capital," p. 132.

merchant's capital (*i.e.* surplus value) is an impossibility so long as equivalents are exchanged; that therefore it can only have its origin in the twofold advantages gained over both the buying and selling producers by the merchant who parasitically shoves himself in between them." Having thus come perilously near the solution of his difficulty, he "shoves" it unceremoniously aside; but the word "shoves," and its qualifying epithet "parasitically," indicate how annoying this obstacle to his design is. The situation, however, is not accurately described by the word "shoves," inasmuch as the middleman, if not expressly called in by producer and consumer, is, as a rule, welcomed by both.[1]

Marx, however, "shoves" him aside together with the class whose existence is "inexplicable" to him; there is no room for them in his scientific theory of surplus value; yet it is precisely here where demand, which is met by the supply which the producer-capitalist provides, makes itself effectively felt, consequently where all the price that is above cost arises quite irrespective of the person who places the supply directly at the service of the demanders.

And still: "The problem is how to account for the origin of capital upon the supposition that the starting-point of the conversion of money into capital is the exchange of equivalents, and that prices are regulated by the average price (*i.e.* ultimately by the value) of commodities."[2] The supposition is, however, what we

[1] I do not mean to imply that it would not be better for the producer (and probably also for the consumer) if he could himself place his productions in the consumer's hands, for it undoubtedly would be; but where this is not possible the middleman is clearly an advantage both for those who wish to sell and for those who wish to buy, for they could neither sell nor buy without him.

[2] "Student's Marx," p. 36.

do not grant, that prices are regulated ultimately by the value of commodities, if value is what Marx says it is—the *cost* of the labour-power. Prices are regulated by various factors but ultimately by demand and supply, and not by labour, except as *one* of the *factors* of cost.

Nor is it to be granted that "the starting-point of the conversion of money into capital is the exchange of equivalents;" for money must have been set aside for use as capital before the capitalist could have set about producing the commodity ultimately offered in exchange. Where does this money come from? This is the point Marx wishes to shirk when he constitutes exchange as the starting-point of capital. The commodities were capital long before they could be exchanged; and the money was earned and saved (probably from wages), and turned into capital before the commodities were produced. Thus the starting-point of capital is not at all where Marx places it, but much farther back.

The problem which thus tries poor Marx's wits is not so insoluble to those who do not shut out all elements except labour and all persons concerned except two capitalists. Capitalist-producers are really not usually the persons who buy or exchange the commodities which each respectively produces. Poor simple-minded Marx could not see where or how surplus value could arise in exchange if it did not arise when two capitalist-producers sold each other equivalents or non-equivalents of labour. He says: "The conclusion is, therefore, that circulation or exchange of commodities does not beget surplus value."[1] "It is impossible for capital to be produced by circulation, and it is equally impossible for it to originate apart from circulation. It must have its origin both in circulation and yet not in circula-

[1] "Capital," p. 143.

tion." (This is too innocent.) "Therefore something must take place in the background."[1]

Yes, something does take place. Marx abstracts the cards while you are astonished at his wonderful handling of them, and produces one he has up his sleeve —the commodity labour-power. It is not, however, trumps; for the truth is there are more persons concerned than capitalist-producers exchanging equivalents of labour; and labourers are not the whole of mankind with the exception of an isolated class of indebted consumers. This would have surprised poor simple Marx. Nor is it necessary in "a bargain" that one should "get the better of the other."

The man who produces iron or steel does not buy the guns the purchaser of his iron or steel makes. The people who buy the guns are people who, as a rule, never produce anything material at all; those, in fact, whom Marx says have all their money given to them by those who manufacture the iron, the steel, and the guns.

But it is not much to the point whether the consumers are also producers, or whether they are only consumers paying for what the capitalist produces. The great point is for those who produce, and for those who wish to understand surplus value, and where and how it arises, that some one demands and pays. It is effective demand keeping always ahead of supply which puts surplus value into the producer's pocket.

The capitalist discovers or imagines we want a new soap, and produces one he thinks will suit us. We do not like it, and we will not buy it; he pays his labourers and he is ruined. He has put a great deal of labour into this soap (for the labourers have worked probably far more than six hours a day); there must be an enor-

[1] "Capital," p. 144.

mous amount of surplus labour in it, consequently of surplus value; but if no merchant, tradesman, or middleman gives him orders for it, it is clear all this surplus value remains where Marx says it arises—in the producer's factory, and the manufacturer will no doubt become fat and rich on the surplus value which has arisen from the surplus labour of his labourers.

It evidently never occurred to poor Marx that all this surplus value which had arisen from his surplus labour in the six hours over and above the six the men had been paid to labour has no value for the capitalist, nor for the labourers if there is no demand for the article manufactured. Yet although it may be as useful an article as soap, if this particular kind does not hit the public taste, if the capitalist has not been skilful in judgment or able and energetic in his arrangements for the sale of it, if, in fact, he has made mistakes it will be difficult to find the surplus value.

Or we do like the soap, it is just what we think we wanted; or perhaps the manufacturer, or other ability he has paid to help him, has devised an attractive advertisement which excites our curiosity or desire. By going to the agent to whom he has consigned the soap, or to the tradesman in the City who has bought it of him, we can get it for, *e.g.* eightpence; the capitalist-producer has perhaps received sevenpence; he has had his surplus value, his profit, for it only cost him, *e.g.*, sixpence a cake. It costs something, however, both in time and money, to go to the City; a tradesman not so far off will get it for us; he probably pays a middleman to get it for him, and we shall pay ninepence; still it would have cost more than a penny besides the time to fetch it for ourselves; or perhaps we find in Bond Street a better selection of soaps and this one

among them, ornamentally put up and thus suitable for presents. Now here we shall pay one shilling, but we still think it worth while. So we have a purchase which, on the whole, we are content with at one shilling. It has also been an advantageous transaction for the Bond Street tradesman (which is, however, not so much as it seems, his expenses in this neighbourhood being heavy and wages high), but no one is cheated, every one is benefited. We know very well we can get the soap for less elsewhere; but we are "inclined," we even prefer to pay more for it where we conveniently find it. This of course would be inexplicable to Marx, for he ridicules the idea of any one being "*inclined*" to pay for anything. Nor can he tolerate the thought that some persons or classes should have so much more money than others that they can afford to give it in return for services other than those of manual labour, or that any one should earn anything except by manual labour.

It is a mistake which, generally speaking, only unintelligent people make, to think that only one party to a transaction can make a good bargain, that some one somewhere, or at least one of the two contracting parties, must be cheated and oppressed. If the soap had been bought at the factory, and sevenpence paid for it instead of a shilling in Bond Street, the labourer would not have received more than he did receive, nor has he or his labour anything to do with the extra fivepence which has arisen as surplus value after it left the producer's hands. If people do not like to pay a shilling for this soap, they can get it elsewhere for less. If they do like to pay a shilling, there are two or three sets of other people besides the labourer who have benefited honestly by the transaction. Nor

if the extra fivepence had never been paid could the labourer have received a fraction more than he did receive, unless the penny over and above the cost (which was the reward of the ability or energy of the capitalist-producer after he had paid the entire cost of the production of the soap) had been retained from the capitalist and divided among the labourers, in which case it is clear he would never have manufactured the soap at all, nor would those labourers have received the wages they did receive, for no man (especially one who has earned his money) will devote his money, time, and ability to production if he does not have a good deal over and above what his production of the articles has cost. The preceding instance is no solitary or imaginary occurrence; it is what happens to everything that is produced.

If you want to buy a fine Oriental carpet in the bazaars at Cairo, you may, or you may not, pay a good deal less for it than you would in Bond Street; that depends on your knowledge of Arabic and of the customs of the country, or upon whether you would have the expense of going expressly to Cairo to buy it. You may pay 20 per cent. more in Bond Street, and yet you may consider it a better bargain than if you had paid 20 per cent. less for it in Cairo. You have not had the trouble and expense of bringing it home, you have had a larger selection of probably more finely and variously assorted goods, and you may have been able to select one which suited your purpose better. The man in Bond Street has doubtless made a good bargain in selling it to you, and you have come off advantageously in paying 20 per cent. more than you would have given in Cairo. But your friend comes in and says: That is the very size,

shape, colour, and pattern that I have been looking for so long. I will give you an extra £5 if you will let me have it. You accept his £5 and he considers it a good bargain for him, for he cannot get a carpet anywhere that pleases him so well. What claim can the labourer who made the carpet have on the former 20 per cent. or on this last £5? It is £5 too much for the carpet, although the man who has bought it does not think so; it is surplus value, but neither he nor the labourer is cheated. Yet all these surplus values, Marx says, are to go into the pocket of the labourer, because surplus value can only arise from surplus labour; on the same principle clearly as the assumption that labourers have already given consumers the money they pay for the produce they buy.

To make these matters clear Marx carefully identifies surplus value with increase in the sum of gold or commodities in circulation; he says: "What is loss of value to B is surplus value to A . . . the same change would have taken place if A . . . had directly stolen the £10 from B. The sum of the values in circulation can clearly not be augmented by any change in their distribution, any more than the quantity of the precious metals in a country by a Jew selling a Queen Anne's farthing for a guinea. . . . Turn and twist as we may, the fact remains unaltered. If equivalents are exchanged, no surplus value results, and if non-equivalents are exchanged, still no surplus value."[1]

Hence he draws his conclusion that "the appropriation of unpaid labour is the secret of surplus value."[2]

Now there are four errors here. The first is to make the surplus value which arises to individuals

[1] "Capital," p. 141. [2] Ibid., p. 607.

in exchange identical with increase in the general sum of existing values. Marx here makes them identical by saying that the sum of the values in circulation cannot be augmented by the surplus value which accrues to A. No; no one ever thought they could be so augmented, nor that the two processes were the same, nor is it necessary to confuse the two by putting them in the same category. There is no increase in the precious metals nor in any commodity in exchange; but for all that, the Jew does get surplus value for the farthing (he and his ancestors have carefully preserved) from the desire of the purchaser who demands it and willingly gives his guinea for it. B sustains no loss; he will probably think he has gained in the payment of surplus value to A, seeing that he has obtained the object of his desire, which is more valuable to him than the coin he has elected to pay for it. So here we have the second error, viz., that what is surplus value to A is loss of value to B. There is neither cheating, robbery, nor loss in the matter any more than there is an augmentation of the values in circulation, but there is augmentation of value to the individuals exchanging.

The third error lies in the statement that no surplus value to any one can arise in exchange either of equivalents or non-equivalents. To the mass of mankind a Queen Anne's farthing and a golden guinea are non-equivalents, to the persons who exchange them they are equivalents. Marx will not have this because he scorns to take human nature into consideration, he abstracts it. In quoting Colonel Torrens to the effect that: "Effectual demand consists in the power and inclination on the part of consumers to give for commodities more capital than their production costs," he

puts a note of admiration after the word "inclination," as if the idea were too ridiculous for comment. He will not look at facts, he abstracts them. The fact is that it matters not whether equivalents or non-equivalents are exchanged, surplus value does arise to the exchangers, although there is no *increase in existing values*, *i.e.* "the quantity of the precious metals in the country." Marx does not admit that any one can be honestly advantaged or convenienced without an increase of the sum of the values in existence.

The fourth error is that surplus value arises from the appropriation of unpaid labour. Surplus value or profit has nothing whatever to do with appropriated labour or unpaid labour, nor with labour of any sort, unless indeed such labour as that of the Jew who exchanges his farthing for a guinea, or that of the merchant or other middleman, which Marx would be the last to say was labour.

It would be trivial to set all this forth discursively, were it not that clever Marx could not see it; it never occurred to him. Socialists are clever men and they cannot see it, and millions of intelligent men listen to them and their gospel of plunder, and think that being such clever men they must know.

Surplus value and value arise then not from labour but from men's desire, and from the energy and skill of those who provide administratively for its satisfaction. In proportion to the desire and according to it will be the demand; in proportion to the demand the supply, and this will regulate price. The price will cover the cost of the labour, but if more is asked for the labour than capitalists are inclined to pay—more than will leave them the profit they mean to have after all costs are paid, they will not devote their

time, their capital, or their abilities to production. If what buyers choose[1] to pay is not sufficient to cover the cost of production and the profit the capitalist intends to have, the article will not be produced.

But after it is produced surplus value will arise as long as people think it an advantage not only to have such articles produced as they desire, but to have all that they require brought in the most convenient form to their doors (although for this a good deal of their money goes into the purveyor's pockets) whether it be the tea and butter on the labourer's breakfast table or the fine lady's silk dress.

Poor simple Marx was ignorant of all this. He did not know at all, and could not understand, how all this came about; he thought if you paid a shilling for something of which the cost of production was sixpence, there was cheating somewhere, "that the seller gets the better of the bargain with the buyer."[2] So simple was he, it never occurred to him that every one knows perfectly well that the cost of production is a great deal less than is paid for any article; that some one, probably several more persons, are all having a good profit out of your shilling, and that, knowing this or not knowing it, you do not think yourself cheated, because you do not start with the idea of buying a thing for the cost of its production, but from quite a different point; that you are perfectly aware, or could perfectly well imagine, that you could have an article for any price you liked to give between—*e.g.*—sixpence and a shilling, and

[1] Notwithstanding the indication Marx gives of his sense of the absurdity of saying that any one wishes, or is inclined, to pay for commodities, the expression is practically true for those who never expect to get something for nothing, and is comprehensible to all men except, apparently, to Marx.

[2] "Student's Marx," p. 36.

that you do not at all grudge the profit the sellers are making. But it is rather odd he should have thought it was the labourer who had boiled or mixed the soap who was defrauded, and that the soap-boiler therefore ought to have had the other sixpence. He considers that an equivalent amount of embodied labour ought to be given for a like amount of labour embodied in the article purchased, that amount and no more unless the surplus amount is paid to the labourer.

It was all a "problem" to Marx, "the problem how to account for the origin of capital upon the supposition that the starting-point of the conversion of money into capital is the exchange of *equivalents*, and that prices are regulated by the average price (*i.e.*, ultimately by the value) of commodities."

Yes, a problem when his false premisses are accepted. And everything here depends on the meanings attached to *equivalents* and *value*.

The meaning Marx attached to equivalents was not what buyer and seller consider equivalents, but equivalents of one particular thing — *i.e.* — labour; and similarly with *value*, Marx meant cost of *labour only*.

But value, cost, price, expense are not, as Marx practically assumes, synonymous terms. Value is an estimate; the word is used in many different senses, but carries an ethical content and permanency with it; it may often be measured by what buyers are willing to give.

But cost is a fact, it can be calculated in figures, and is temporary and accidental.

Price is what buyers pay, and often does not coincide with either value or cost.

Expense is an outlay which may or may not coincide with cost. Marx, however, and his Socialist following, insist that the value of any article is the cost of the labour which has produced it and that it coincides with its normal price.[1]

Marx's professed difficulty in understanding anything which does not fit in with his theory is based principally upon the use he makes of hypotheses. He treats a supposition as scientific truth upon which anything and everything may be built. Naturally, he finds it difficult to make truth fit in with it, but instead of abstracting the suppositions he abstracts the truth, and then says "it won't add up."

This goes to the root of things. Marx's theories could not have been presented with a shadow of a chance of success but for this radical vice of assuming hypothesis to be truth.

He assumes first that only so and so many hours' labour is necessary to maintain the labourer and his family, next that the capitalist *compels* him to labour longer without pay; and then that the cost of the labour-power and the cost of producing it are never paid for at all.

Now as no value can arise except from labour, and as *more* than the cost of labour is paid for commodities, and as Marx claimed this for the labourer as surplus

[1] Professor Huxley says:—"There is another even greater danger in the Socialistic theory of value. It takes away the premium for efficiency. It makes a man's claims for reward depend not upon what he has done for others but upon how he has occupied himself. Time wasted counts for as much as time spent. . . . To say, as Marx does, that value depends on the quantity of socially necessary labour represented by an article introduces two conflicting standards. Social necessity is a quality which varies in degree —a fact whose consequences Marx fails to take into account."—*Economics*, p. 95.

value, maintaining it had arisen from surplus labour, he was of course anxious to have as much value out of this surplus labour as possible. But here he found himself in a difficulty; he came up against his own doctrine concocted in the interest of the labourer that the greater the productiveness of labour the less its value; and *that* naturally did not suit him at all after his invention of surplus value which is to belong entirely to the labourer, so he resolved that it should only hold good in respect of the time which it was necessary the labourer should labour for his own maintenance which the capitalist pays for and not when surplus value was in question, which is the value which accrues after the first six hours which belong to the man who pays for them. So in order to get as little as possible or nothing at all for the capitalist, and as much as possible, in fact all, for the labourer, he had to tell the labourer that the more idle and stupid he was during the time his labour was paid for by the capitalist the greater was the value produced (*i.e.*, the price of the articles had to pay for the time, no matter how little was produced in the time), but *after* the number of labour-hours were up which are sufficient for a man's maintenance the greater the productiveness of labour the greater is the value produced, which is simply true, but to effect this right-about-face he had to turn his coat and in fine scientific phraseology declare: Whereas "value varies inversely as the productiveness of labour;"[1] "surplus value" (all that in the price which is above cost) "varies as the productiveness of labour;"[2] *i.e.*, up to a certain point, that point at which other people than the labourer might expect to get paid, up to that point the more unproductive the labour the more value, because the

[1] "Student's Marx," p. 3. [2] Ibid., p. 69.

labourer is thus paid more for a small quantity of inferior stuff, being paid by *time*, than the clever labourer has received for good work quickly turned out; after that point the reverse of the truth is true. Because up to that point, however idle and stupid the labourer, the price must cover the cost of his labour reckoned by time, or the commodity could not be produced; but after this point all the value which accrues from whatever source is to be set down to the productiveness of his labour, because this so-called surplus value arising in so-called surplus time is to belong to the labourer and therefore must be made as large as possible. Thus the more he produces in this surplus time, *i.e.*, the more productive his labour is the more value there is; whereas when he is working for wages during the first six hours for the capitalist the more he produces the less value the production has. If he produces six boxes in his first six hours they are worth sixpence apiece; if he only produces three they are worth a shilling each; but in the second six hours if he produces six they are worth a shilling a piece because "surplus value varies as the productiveness of labour," while "value" (that which arises in the first six hours) "varies *inversely* as the productiveness of labour."

Thus to support his theory of surplus value Marx has to reverse his scientific truth in order that if any one gets anything besides the labourer it may be shown to be theft. All the sources of value or elements of price are not only studiously ignored but denied; in fact, the same process of abstraction as was applied to concrete labour when found inconvenient is applied to everything inconvenient to science as taught by Marx; abstract it and labour alone remains. Abstract everything which shows that anything belongs to anything

but labour. Abstract your great scientific truth and put in its place the opposite thus: While the productiveness of labour lessens value and makes commodities dear, it "augments the surplus value in a commodity, and at the same time cheapens the commodity."[1]

Now as "the capitalist is anxious to heighten the productiveness of labour" in order to cheapen commodities, because this "also cheapens the especial commodity, labour-power,"[2] we suppose we might take it for granted he had done so; at all events, things are very cheap compared to what they were forty or fifty years ago, and much larger quantities are produced in the same labour-time; but instead of this cheapening of commodities cheapening labour-power, as Marx says, the very reverse has happened, for we see commodities very much cheaper and labour very much dearer than in his time. This process of the cheapening of commodities was to increase surplus value because, according to Marx, profit only arises from surplus value; and the cheapening also "cheapens the especial commodity labour-power, and so increases the relative amount of surplus value."[3] Therefore we may suppose as a large amount of surplus value was the result of cheap labour that there is a very small amount of surplus value now labour is so dear.

And we might suppose that this result, had it happened, would have proved Marx's science sound in this one respect at least. It is, therefore, strange that Socialists talk so much about the enormous surplus value they say is accruing to capitalists now; they might at least have tried to score one point for Marx.

If Marx's premiss were correct—viz., that "equiva-

[1] "Student's Marx," p. 69. [2] Ibid., p. 69. [3] Ibid.

lents" and "value" meant a certain and equal amount of labour-time—his conclusion that there is a problem to solve might also be correct. But his premiss is incorrect. By tying equivalents and values up to labour-time he stultifies the whole matter. He abstracts all the necessary factors, and manufactures other factors which he tries to fit in. He determines that "value" is "the cost of labour," he uses the terms cost and value as if they were synonymous with each other and with "price," and then he arrives at the very obvious fact that the values in circulation cannot be augmented by any change in their distribution. But there is an alteration of price in exchange and surplus value and increase of price do arise in the process of exchange. This would not happen if labour were the only factor, or if it were the factor which regulated value. If you give a man £1 for what has only cost him 10s., he will have 10s. more in his pocket than before, and you also may have more value in your possession by the transaction; this does not, as a rule occur with the great mass of consumable goods, bu estimates of value being various it is what is otherwise continually happening, and therefore it is a fact which cannot be ignored.

If any one wanting an article which you have given £1 for will give you something you like better, or which you think rare or difficult to obtain, though it only cost him 15s., you will consider the exchange an equivalent. And so the prices or the relative values in exchange will have altered, and there will be surplus value in money to the persons transacting although labour has not appeared in it and has had nothing to do with it and the sum of the values in circulation has not increased. Thus surplus value or surplus

price does arise in exchange although exchange be not the cause.

This question of surplus value is the pivot upon which the whole of Marx's theories of labour, of value, of wealth, of capital, and of the circulation of commoditities and of money, and of the enormity and dishonesty of the present industrial system turn, and is that upon which Socialism, in so far as it claims to be founded on justice, depends.

Marx says: "Money is a commodity like the rest, and its value is determined by the labour-time necessary for its production, and is expressed by the quantity of any other commodity that costs the same amount of labour-time."[1]

It has been shown by others that the value of money and gold is not "determined by the labour-time necessary for its production."[2] As all this can only be taken in connection with the theory of circulation, I will transfer Marx's own words concerning the circulation of money and commodities as abridged and explained from Aveling's "Student's Marx."

"*Preliminary Stages.*—The production of commodities, their circulation, the world-embracing form of commerce dating from the sixteenth century, lead up to the capitalistic system.

"M—C—M′. Money (*m*), the final product of the circulation of commodities, is the first form of capital. The formula C—M—C′ is that of the circulation of commodities, but this formula also implies M—C—M′, the formula for capitalistic circulation. All money describing this latter circle is, potentially, capital.

[1] "Student's Marx," p. 22.
[2] Flint, "Socialism in England."

"*Comparison.*—A very important comparison is then instituted between these two formulæ—C—M—C′ (circulation of commodities), and M—C—M′ (capitalistic circulation). In comparing them, let us call the former C—M—C′ (1), and the latter M—C—M′ (2).

"*Resemblances.*—The two formulæ (1) and (2) are alike in three points.

"(*a*) In each, there are two phases, a sale and a purchase.

"(*b*) In each, commodities and money are concerned.

"(*c*) In each, three people are concerned.

"*Differences.*—The two formulæ (1) and (2) differ in twelve points.

"(*a*) (1) begins with a purchase and ends with a sale; (2) begins with a sale and ends with a purchase.

"(*b*) In (1) M is the intermediary; in (2) C is the intermediary.

"(*c*) In (1) the two end terms are commodities; in (2) the two end terms are money.

"(*d*) In (1) money is spent; in (2) money is advanced.

"(*e*) In (1) the same piece of money changes place twice; in (2) the same commodity changes place twice.

"(*f*) In (1) the same piece of money passes from one hand to another; in (2) the same piece of money returns to the same hand.

"(*g*) In (1), if a reflux of money to the same starting-point does occur, the series C—M—C′ starts again; in (2) the series M—C—M′ is incomplete until such reflux of money to the starting-point does occur.

"(*h*) The aim of (1) is use-value; the aim of (2) is exchange-value.

"(*i*) In (1) the two end terms have different qualities; in (2) the two end terms have different quantities

$M' = M + \Delta M$, *i.e.*, M′ is equal to the original sum advanced, M, + an increase, ΔM. This ΔM is surplus value.

"(*k*) In (1) the value of C and C′ are normally equivalent; in (2) the values of M and M′ are normally not equivalent.

"(*l*) In (1) the process ends in the consumption of C; in (2) the process is endless. M′ becomes a new M.

"(*m*) The circulation of commodities is a means to an end, that end being the consumption of use-values.

"The circulation of money as capital is an end in itself.

"*Aim of Capitalist.*—The aim of the capitalist is not a use-value, but ΔM, *i.e.*, surplus-value.

"*General Formula.*—This general formula M—C—M′ covers not only merchant's capital, but industrial capital also. In interest-bearing capital the formula M—C—M′ is shortened into M—M′."

The first important statement in this remarkable utterance is contained in the first paragraph, *i.e.*, that "the production and circulation of commodities, and its developed form, commerce, leading up to the capitalist system, date from a comparatively quite recent time, *i.e.*, the sixteenth century."

The second follows it: "Money, the final product of the circulation of commodities, is the first form of capital."[1]

Now these statements do not correspond to facts.

Capital and commerce, the production and circulation of commodities, have existed ever since men accumulated more than they required for their own

[1] "Student's Marx," p. 32.

consumption and put that accumulation to use by means of exchange; ever since the first shepherds came down from the hills and exchanged their herds or their wool for the fruits or asses of the plains; since Phœnician mariners brought Syrian dyes, silks, or precious stones, and exchanged them for tin, for oak, for hides. Their accumulations for exchange were their capital quite irrespective of money or the kind of commodities accumulated. It is immaterial whether they exchanged their raw silks, fleeces, dyes, or pearls, for copper, silver, gold, or money. The process of exchange was commerce precisely as is our exchange of calicoes for ivory, and practically the same as commerce in which bills, cheques, and money are the medium of exchange. Commerce does not depend for its existence upon the form in which payment is made, but is as much commerce when no coin is in question as when it is.

Marx says "the circulation of commodities is the starting-point of capital;"[1] but this, far from being the truth, is the very reverse of it, for the commodities themselves are the capital, are what Marx himself calls "constant capital." The process of accumulating them is the starting-point of capital. When the commodities have accumulated the owners begin to circulate this their capital.

Nor is it true that "money (*m*), the final product of the circulation of commodities, is the first form of capital;" again precisely the reverse of this is true. The first form of capital is the accumulation of commodities which are to be *used productively*, the commodities themselves are the *capital*, and finally money appears as one form of capital.

[1] "Capital," p. 123.

To say that money is the *first* form is to confuse money with capital, and to treat it as if capital consisted of money alone. Marx even goes further and says:—

"It is under the form of money that value begins and ends, and begins again, every act of its own spontaneous generation."[1]

Was there then no value before money was made use of? Was there no value in all the rich products of the East which were bartered throughout the then known world for ages before money was coined?

Money, as a medium of exchange, only emerged after ages of commerce in which capital did not consist (any more than it can be said to *consist* now) of money. It consisted then, as it consists to a very large extent now, of the means of production and the goods to be exchanged; the only difference being that money formed no part of capital then, whereas now capital may be either money, or commodities, or both.

After the elaborate formulæ in which Marx compares and contrasts "the circulation of commodities" and "capitalistic circulation" we have these deductions:—

1st. That the circulation of the commodity ends in its consumption. "The process ends in the consumption of C."

2nd. That this consumption was the end aimed at by the circulation. "The circulation of commodities is a means to an end, that end being the consumption of use-values."

3d. That "the circulation of money or capital is an end in itself."

Now it is not apparent that the process, *i.e.*, the circulation of the commodity, ends in its consumption; on the contrary, the circulation of all that is most

[1] "Capital," p. 132.

valuable ends in the use and preservation of the articles circulated; much less is it true that consumption is the end in view in circulating commodities. There are so many things circulated which are not eaten nor consumed, nor intended to be, that consumption cannot be the object of circulation; the end to which circulation is the means is clearly the satisfaction of desire irrespective of whether that desire be for objects for mental or physical use or for consumption.

The reason why Marx alleges that consumption is the object of circulation is principally perhaps because his theories have generally only the satisfaction of the material desires of the labourer in view, and also doubtless because the greater the consumption of use-values (useful articles) the more money is secured for manual labour, since they must be replaced; but, whatever the reason, it is not true at all that the *object* of circulating commodities is the *consumption* of use-values; for even if consumption were the end in view of the person purchasing, it is not the end of circulation; the end to which circulation is the means is the acquirement of a commodity, which, again, far from being necessarily an article of consumption, is generally money.

Now, it being as clear to Marx as it is to us that the doctrine: consumption of use-values is the object of circulation, would not fit in with "money is a commodity like the rest," it is obvious that another object had to be found for the circulation of money; surplus value of course would not do, so he could find nothing better than that money was circulated merely for the sake of circulating it. "The circulation of money as capital is an end in itself."

We are to believe that this is why the capitalist circulates capital!

As clearly no one would circulate money merely for the pleasure of circulating it, it is obvious that any one who circulates money must have some other end in view than circulation; in fact, as usual, Marx immediately afterwards saves himself by confuting his own doctrine thus: "The aim of the capitalist is not a use-value but ΔM, *i.e.*, surplus value." So we see that after all the end to which the circulation of money is the means is not its circulation but surplus value; which surplus value of course the capitalist gets. Why then did Marx say that circulation was an end in itself? Because he must leave himself a loophole by which to escape; his own doctrines are stone walls which he can neither get over nor get round; for if the aim of the capitalist (*i.e.*, surplus value) is attained by the circulation of money, Marx stands confronted by his doctrine that labour is the source of value and that surplus value arises from surplus labour; therefore he cannot say the end of the circulation of money is surplus value, there being no labour in the process, so he says the end is merely circulation; but as he cannot get over the fact that the aim of the capitalist is surplus value, he slips that admission in separately, leaving each reader to piece it all together as best he may.

Marx divides capital into "merchant's capital," "industrial capital," and "interest-bearing capital."[1]

As he hereby grants the fact (which he cannot, of course, overlook) that capital does bear interest, *i.e.*, surplus value to the lender without the aid of the labourer, he clearly nullifies his dogma that "there is

[1] "Student's Marx," p. 34.

not one single atom of its value which does not owe its existence to unpaid labour."[1]

Surplus value to the lender deriving from interest-bearing capital arises from the desire of some persons to have the use of more money than they possess, not always (far from it) for "the exploitation of labour" or to use productively, but often for the purchase of "fripperies" and the gratification of various desires. And if (quite irrespective of the object for which the borrowers desire the money) any one will abstain from gratifying his own desire (whether that desire be in the direction of enjoyment or productive employment) in order to gratify the borrower's desire, the borrower must in fairness give such a *quid pro quo* as would indemnify the lender for any other use, productive or otherwise, he might make of the money; whence it follows that if surplus value thus arises in one instance, it may, *pari passu*, arise similarly in other cases because of a weakness humanity has of gratifying its desires easily and quickly. However, that evidently did not occur to Marx, for he says the aim of the capitalist is surplus value, which he does not and cannot get out of money at all but only out of surplus labour. This he illustrates thus:—

"Suppose a spinner to have advanced a capital of £10,000, of which four-fifths (£8000) are laid out in cotton, machinery, &c., and one-fifth (£2000) in wages. Let him produce 240,000 lbs. of yarn annually, having a value of £12,000."

I will abbreviate the quotation and remark only that there is here clearly a surplus of £2000.

Marx continues: "£2000 is £2000. We can neither

[1] "Capital," p. 592.

see nor smell in this sum of money a trace of surplus value. When we know that a given value is surplus value, we know how its owner came by it"[1] . . . (this close and cogent reasoning is very instructive); "with regard to the additional value of £2000 . . . how that originated we know perfectly well. There is not one single atom of its value that does not owe its existence to unpaid labour."[2]

Thus it is made clear that surplus value can only arise from "industrial capital." Marx gives various detailed examples to prove this point.

He says, first, that the same amount of labour is embodied in 15s. in gold as in 10 lbs. of cotton-yarn. "This two-and-a-half days' labour is represented by a piece of gold of the value of 15s. Hence 15s. is an adequate price for the 10 lbs. of yarn." And he formulates his example in this way:[3]—

	Shillings.
Cost of raw cotton	10
Cost of wear and tear of machinery .	2
Cost of labour-power	3
Total cost .	15

And he says that 15s. is all that the capitalist can get for this yarn *because* only 15s. was spent in producing it, and that therefore he cannot get any surplus value out of it.

He then postulates that the capitalist manufactures 20 lbs. of yarn, and that he makes the labourer work twelve hours a day instead of six but that he pays him only for six, and he brings out the following result:—

[1] "Capital," p. 592. [2] Ibid., p. 595.
[3] Ibid., p. 171.

	Shillings.
Cost of raw cotton	20
Cost of wear and tear of machinery .	4
Cost of labour-power	3
Total cost .	27

It will be observed that he has here doubled the cost of the machinery and the cotton, but that he has not paid anything more for the labour which produced 10 lbs. of yarn than for that which produced 20 lbs. We have already three unproved statements, one that fifteen shillings' worth of gold and fifteen shillings worth of cotton-yarn have the same amount of labour embodied in them; next, that the reason why the capitalist cannot get more than fifteen shillings for his product is because only fifteen shillings had been spent in its production; and then that the capitalist compelled the labourer to work twelve hours for the same price as he gave him for six hours; and, to crown this, he adds that the capitalist sells this twenty-seven shillings' worth of yarn for thirty shillings, so securing for himself the surplus value of three shillings.

"The sum of the values of the commodities that entered into the process amounts to 27s. The value of the yarn is 30s. Therefore the value of the product is one-ninth greater than the value advanced for its production; 27s. have been transformed into 30s.; a surplus value of 3s. has been created."[1]

But the question, of course, immediately arises, why, if the capitalist can sell for thirty shillings that which has only cost him twenty-seven, he cannot sell what cost him fifteen shillings for sixteen and sixpence? Marx does not answer this, nor notice that such a question is

[1] "Capital," p. 176.

likely to arise. We have only his reason to fall back upon that more than fifteen shillings could not be obtained for what had cost fifteen shillings *because* only that sum had been spent in its production. But why, then, could thirty shillings be obtained for what had cost only twenty-seven shillings? Logically, and practically, if the capitalist can get thirty shillings for what only costs him twenty-seven, he can get sixteen-and-six for what only costs him fifteen shillings.[1]

And how is this doctrine that there is not one single atom of value that does not owe its existence to unpaid labour compatible with the statement that:

"The never-ending augmentation of exchange-value, which the miser strives after, by seeking to save his money from circulation, is attained by the more acute capitalist by constantly throwing it afresh into circulation?"[2]

Circulation is scarcely synonymous with employment of labour. Yet here we have the "acute capitalist" throwing his capital afresh into "circulation," not employment of labour, which would have been just as easy to say had Marx meant to say it; but he could not continuously pretend to ignore the other sorts of capital which he himself classifies as merchants' capital and interest-bearing capital, nor the fact that these also do bear surplus value; but as this fact is a refutation in itself that surplus value can only arise from surplus labour, it must be kept out of sight as much as possible.[3]

We have, however, Marx's admission that *exchange-*

[1] This example of the cotton-yarn Mr. Gunton, an American economist, has gone very fully into and exposed in his "Economic Basis of Socialism."

[2] "Capital," p. 131.

[3] Professor Flint says: "The whole of that portion of his argument which is intended to prove that profit cannot arise in the process of circulation or exchange is also dependent on an abstract

value is *augmented* by circulation, a never-ending augmentation being attained by the capitalist, yet we are told by him that "surplus value cannot be created by the simple circulation of commodities," and that in "an exchange of equivalents . . . there is no alteration of value, no creation of surplus value;" that "circulation or exchange of commodities does not beget surplus value."[1] Yet we see the capitalist throws his money afresh into circulation, which attains a never-ending augmentation of value.

But what has this process of circulation, whether it be of commodities resulting from industrial capital in combination with labour or the circulation of merchants or of industrial capital to do with labour and the labourer?

To the term "circulation" there is no condition attached as to the channel into which the capitalist is to throw his capital afresh; on the contrary: "The restless, never-ending process of profit-making alone is what he aims at."[2] And it is by no means necessary in order to make profit that he should use it in manufacture.

There is no labour of the labourer involved in the circulation of capital. Marx himself would never think of admitting that the process in the market by which, as he says, one capitalist outwits another, has any labour in it, or that any wage whatever was due to the capitalist-producers exchanging their wares. He evidently sees the difficulty he is in, and tries to account for the augmentation of value by the invention of a theory that value expands spontaneously thus:—

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notion to which nothing real corresponds. Circulation as he conceives of it; circulation as an exchange either of equivalents in which no one gains, or of non-equivalents in which what one gains another loses, is not a normal economic process, or the process treated of in economic science."—*Socialism*, p. 187.

[1] "Student's Marx," pp. 35, 36. [2] "Capital," p. 130.

"In truth, however, value is here the active factor in a process in which, while constantly assuming the form in turn of money and commodities, it at the same time changes in magnitude, differentiates itself by throwing off surplus value from itself; the original value, in other words, expands spontaneously. For the movement in the course of which it adds surplus value is its own movement, its expansion therefore is automatic expansion. Because it is value, it has acquired the occult quality of being able to add value to itself."[1]

Is it not nonsense to talk of value possessing an "occult" quality? There is nothing at all occult or mysterious about it. Neither does value expand spontaneously nor automatically. None of this is true. Any amount of value may be sealed up in a chest for any amount of time and no expansion will take place; it will not be found to have differentiated itself, to have thrown off surplus value, nor to have added one jot "by its own movement;" it will not move at all by itself. Marx insists upon excluding all human agency except labour, but he must have been at his wit's end when he invented automatic expansion; he had, as a matter of fact, come up against one of his own walls.

The *active* factor in the process is not value but the wit, the energy, the industry of the capitalist, which are all creators of greater value than labour. Marx has shut out all these; he will not see energy, brains, nor anything but labour; and as labour has created some value so all value, when labour has clearly nothing more to do with it, expands itself by automatic action, by an occult quality!

Thus it is admitted by Marx, although in the very

[1] "Capital," p. 131.

teeth of his doctrine, that surplus value can only arise from labour, that value as capital, whether in the form of money or commodities, can and does augment, expand, and increase without any assistance from labour, only not by any human agency; it is not ability, nor energy, nor industry which adds the value and consequently has a right to whatever is added; the value expands itself *automatically*, adds value to itself. That there may be no doubt about this we are told "that same value now in the circulation M—C—M, or the circulation of capital, suddenly presents itself as an independent substance, endowed with a motion of its own, passing through a life process of its own, in which money and commodities are mere forms which it assumes and casts off in turn. Nay, more. . . . It differentiates itself as original value from itself as surplus value."[1]

So value does all the augmentation for itself without any assistance whatever; and also, no doubt, decides that the augmentation shall belong to the labourer.

"The exchange of commodities in its normal state is an exchange of equivalents, consequently no method for increasing value."[2] "If commodities, or commodities and money, of equal exchange value are exchanged . . . there is no creation of surplus value."[3]

"Surplus value cannot be created by circulation."[4]

Circulation, we have been already told, is the end and object of circulation: "the circulation of money as capital is an end in itself," which it would not be if surplus value arose and thus were the object and the end of circulation, "but surplus-value cannot

[1] "Capital," p. 132.
[2] Ibid., p. 136.
[3] Ibid., p. 140.
[4] Ibid., p. 143.

be created by circulation." Marx will not hear of anything other than labour causing surplus value or profit except "automatic expansion."

Marx tries to persuade us that there is no contradiction in all this, that it is all purely logical and scientific by saying that "behind all attempts to represent the circulation of commodities as a source of surplus-value there lurks a mixing up of use-value and exchange-value."[1]

He thus faces, and at the same time tries to shirk, the fact that no one will accept in exchange anything to which he does not attach greater use-value than that which he gives in exchange by saying there is "a mixing up of use-value and exchange-value."

But it is not a mixing up, it is a recognition of the fact that exchange will collapse altogether unless use-value attaches to what is offered, and that it is for this use-value that price is paid and the commodities are exchanged; Marx will not recognise that exchange only exists because people desire the useful article which others possess; he was obliged to ignore this in order to pave the way for the appearance in a varied form of his great central doctrine, surplus value, which is the very keystone of his arch.

Naturally "the origin of surplus value, ΔM, is not in the money itself;[2] the formation of ΔM (surplus value) takes place in the use-value of C, *i.e.*, in the consumption of the commodity."[3]

Now that is very curious. The capitalist or any one else has only to consume commodities to obtain surplus value! This has the method of being a simple way of obtaining profit, and it is remarkable that those "greedy grabbers," the capitalists, should ever trouble themselves

[1] "Capital," p. 137. [2] "Student's Marx," p. 38. [3] Ibid., p. 39.

to do anything but consume each other's commodities. The reason, of course, that other methods are resorted to, is obviously, that whatever the magnitude of the surplus value formed by the consumption of commodities it is evidently not the consumer who appropriates it; the consumer probably does not know where to find the surplus value which was accruing while he ate his loaf; it is to be feared the consumer never will benefit by the surplus value his consumption of commodities creates unless he is a labourer; Marx certainly does not mean any one but the labourer to have it, which seems rather unfair, seeing that he invented his theory that labour-power was consumed by the labourer using it in order to get for the labourer—the consumer of it—payment for its consumption, and that he might build upon this consumption his claim both for double value and surplus value for the labourer thus:—

"A commodity has therefore to be found whose use has the property of being a source of value, whose consumption creates value. That commodity is labour-power."[1]

This, then, is what he was aiming to arrive at when he declared surplus value arose from the consumption of the commodity; it might have been simpler and straighter to say surplus value arose from the consumption of one particular commodity, *i.e.*, labour-power, as

[1] "Capital is charged with a worse fault than indolence. . . . It is said to be all stolen from labour, and to grow only by constantly stealing from it. This is the thesis on the proof of which Karl Marx concentrated his energies in his treatise on 'Capital' . . . by erroneous definitions of value and price, by excluding utility from or including it in his estimate of value just as it suited his purpose, by unwarranted assumptions regarding the functions of labour, and by numerous verbal and logical jugglerie, he elaborated a pretended demonstration."—*Flint's "Socialism,"* p. 164.

this is actually what he meant. To arrive at this, however, he must of course ignore the difference between use and consumption and inferentially postulate that they are synonymous. It is by methods of this description that he arrives at seeming proof of various doctrines.

Naturally when once you have confounded—

Value with cost, and treated cost and value as synonymous;

Allowed that value is determined by quantity of labour-time;

When you have granted that consumption creates value;

That labour is the creator of value; and

That labour-power suffers consumption *before* it creates, it follows that labour-power ought to have the whole price and all profit howsoever and wheresoever it arises. But all these assumptions have to be turned into proven facts before you arrive at the desired conclusion.

The fact is, Marx is on the horns of a dilemma when he says that the capitalist's sole object is surplus value which the labourer creates, for it is obvious if the undertaking is a failure and there is a *minus* quantity of value, and bankruptcy merely (as does sometimes happen) that the labourer has not only created no surplus value but no value at all (price, value, and profit, standing here as before for exchangeable terms), and Marx falls upon the one horn, *i.e.*, the extinction of his theory that labour creates value and surplus value; for it has clearly done nothing but eat up the capitalist's capital and caused it to "vanish;" or he falls on the other horn, that some other factor must have been at work creating the *minus* and the *surplus*.

He cannot say the capitalist, whose sole object was surplus value, and who has lost his capital, has failed to produce value, for that would make it clear that he is the person upon whom value, whether *minus* or *surplus*, depends and not the labourer at all, and thus he lands on one horn of the dilemma which is that some one other than the labourer, and something other than labour, has been at work in the creation of the *minus* and the *surplus;* or he falls on the other horn, on the curious fact that the labourers have laboured all the hours they were paid to labour and all those surplus hours for which they were not paid, and that the product of their labour has not brought in even sufficient price to cover the wages which they did receive, and which is the extinction of his theory on this side also.

And Marx is face to face when trying to get on his feet again with the ugly fact that there is a factor on the side of the capitalist which affects and produces the *minus* and the *surplus* value, and that that factor is clearly not labour.

Ability then produced the *surplus* value, the lack of it the *minus* value; when ability wherewith to grapple with the circumstances failed, when there was not sufficient to meet the demands made upon it, there was a *minus* value.

There is frequently a disposition on the part even of able men to talk of luck, chance, and circumstance as the principal factors in success or failure; but ability means neither more nor less than power to grapple with the unknown, the unforeseen, the adverse; and the amount and quality of this power determine the measure of success or failure in the struggle between mind and the opposing forces. Such struggles have nothing to do

with labour *quâ* labour, nor with the labourer; and the result, whatever it may be, is uninfluenced by him.

Thus the unpleasant fact stares the Socialist in the face whichever way he turns, that ability is the creator of value; when ability is absent value fails, the labourer has been ploughing the sands and has produced no value whatever because ability was not directing, and labour though labouring was helpless and unproductive.

It is often said that ability could do nothing without labour, but this is untrue; it would have to waste its own time doing that which power of an inferior order can do, as when horses are harnessed to save the superior labour of man, and bullocks to save the more valuable labour of horses; but ability can and does do its most valuable work without the labour of the labourer. Not the labour of millions of labourers could create the imperishable value which the past and the present yields; it could not even have built the Pyramids, the construction and meaning of which to the present day even high ability has been scarcely able to understand; it could certainly not paint a picture, write a poem, nor produce one sweet sound; nor could it give us anything that science, the thinker, the explorer, the inventor give; but the poet or the thinker can, and does when put to it, supply his own material wants, although the loss to the world in the decrease of the product of his more valuable powers is great.

Marx's view of labour and his glorification of it resembles that of the organ-blower who did not, it is true, try to appropriate *all* the glory, *all* the price for labour, as Marx does, but only to share the credit: "Say '*we*' or I will not go on blowing;" and the organist passed, so to speak, this eight hours' Bill,

granted the higher wage, said "*we*," and went on with his playing of Handel.

While Watt sat gazing at the kettle, the labourer hammered the iron to which the thinker gave wings.

The farther thought carries us the clearer do we see how small comparatively is the value of labour. Back through the ages our marvel still is the knowledge, the ability, embodied in the creations of the past.

Why do we all bow down before ability? Because ability alone can help us in our sorest needs, in all our higher desires. We ourselves can labour; we can all kill and cook; we can all plough, wash, and scrub, but we cannot all create; we may labour till the crack of doom and yet produce nothing that posterity cares to have.

Labour is compelled to bow to talent by virtue of its knowledge of itself, of its own incapacity for anything except labour or routine work under the direction of ability, and men pay willingly any price for that to which they are so deeply indebted and without which they would be so helpless.

It is also the rarity, the comparative rarity, of talent that makes it so valuable; its *price* is often merely that of labour, sometimes less; but no price, however high, that is granted to labour, or that labour can claim, can raise labour to the rank or the *value* of ability. The labourer can rise, can raise himself out of his own rank to the ranks of ability if ability is in him; if it is not no one else, no price, can raise him or his value; labour *quâ* labour can never be on a line with ability, as mere ability can never be on a line with genius.

Labour is but the humble assistant of ability and can never be anything else; but the labourer may rise

from his labour, as many labourers have risen before him. If ability resides in him nothing can chain him to labour, and no one desires to pin him down to it; the world always wants ability and can never have too much of it. Labour there is always enough of; ability is rare; the lack of it is represented by the amount of labour in the world.

The labourer in whom ability resides will always, and does now, join the ranks of ability whenever he sees fit, and he is always welcome; he comes into a region where he finds minds related to his own; he leaves his Socialist agitators behind; he does not want them, he is independent of them; but if ability does not reside in him he stays where he is while the Socialist "prods" him till he is sore all over and more helpless than before, and then he falls a prey to the "prodder."

Marx says money is a commodity, not a symbol: "The fact that money can, in certain functions, be replaced by mere symbols of itself, gave rise to that other mistaken notion that it is a mere symbol."[1] "It is a commodity like the rest, and its value is determined by the labour-time necessary for its production."[2]

This is a strange statement, seeing that money does not correspond to Marx's own definition of a commodity, which is something that "is not consumed by the producer, but by some other person;" unless indeed Marx never meant anything but *used* when he said consumed, which however could scarcely be seeing the use he makes of his theory of the *consumption* of labour-power.

When Marx says a commodity is something which is consumed by somebody—*i.e.*, a loaf or labour-power

[1] "Capital," p. 63. [2] "Student's Marx," p. 22.

—when he could not allow any escape from this precise statement without causing his whole fabric to fall to pieces he cannot himself escape from it when money or any other particular thing is in question; it is all important to him to prove and maintain that labour-power is *consumed*, not *used*, but *consumed*. Labour-power, he says, is a commodity which when bought must be paid for on account of its later *consumption*; that it is a mistake to think that what is at present paid for is its functioning; that the price is for the *consumption* of the labour-power. There is nothing in the whole of his work more important, more necessary to his two values, to his whole theory of value than this *consumption*; therefore when money is concerned by virtue of its being *a commodity like the rest*, and being thus brought within his definition of a commodity we must understand that money is consumed, and it must be looked upon, as regards *consumption*, in the same light as a loaf or as labour-power; it goes, vanishes altogether, not merely passes from the keeping of one individual to that of another to be of further use in the world, but disappears as money absolutely, just like coal or wood does when in ashes.

Now, whatever may be thought of the consumption of "the commodity labour-power," if consumption by some one who is not the producer of the commodity is a necessary condition of a commodity, money clearly is not a commodity, for money in changing hands is not consumed; on the contrary, Marx himself says that value, whether money or commodities, augments in circulation by spontaneous expansion; now, augmentation is the very opposite of consumption; "the miser is merely the capitalist gone mad,"[1] because he does

[1] "Capital."

not allow his money to change hands; the "more acute capitalist" strives after augmentation, and finds it, Marx says, in circulation. Strange he did not see herein the refutation of the spontaneous expansion of value!

Then we are told that "gold has become money in consequence of all other commodities expressing their value in gold."[1] When did all other commodities express their value in gold before it became money?

"Gold, as we saw, became ideal money, or a measure of values, in consequence of all other commodities measuring their values by it."[2]

"Gold and silver, just as they come out of the bowels of the earth, are forthwith the direct incarnation of human labour. Hence the magic of money."[3]

These are very strange statements, and are so glaringly at variance with fact that they scarcely call for more comment than they have already had from others.

There are probably but few who see with Marx "the mystical character of gold and silver," or "the magic of money" in any economic sense; even the disciples of Marx might have a difficulty in finding anything mystical or magical about a substance whose value can be measured by the number of hours, weeks, or days it takes a labouring man to dig up. Its "value is determined by the labour-time required for its production, and is expressed by the quantity of any other commodity that costs the same amount of labour-time."[4]

"The false appearance of things is that all other commodities express their value in gold, because gold is money."[5]

"What appears to happen is, not that gold becomes money in consequence of all other commodities express-

[1] "Capital," p. 82. [2] Ibid., p. 65. [3] "Student's Marx."
[4] "Capital," p. 64. [5] "Student's Marx."

ing their values in it, but, on the contrary, that all other commodities universally express their values in gold, because it is money."[1]

What *appears* to happen—that all other commodities express their values in gold because it is money—then is not true, but what is true, according to Marx, is that gold became money because all other commodities expressed their values in gold before gold was coined and used as money.

Marx says: "Money itself has no price,"[2] yet Professor Anton Menger says the essential characteristic of money is its saleableness which, in the light of Marx's science, is inexplicable, as are also the daily transactions of the money market.

Marx also says: "An object may have a price without having value."[3]

Will any one give money, or anything as price, for an article which has no value for them or for any one? If there is any one who will pay anything at all for any object that object must have that value to them which they are willing to pay for it, and even that value to Marx himself which is represented by the quantity of labour (dead or living labour measured by time, days, weeks, and hours) embodied in whatever is given for it as the price of it.

We are also told that uncultivated land has no value. Marx admits that it has price, for he could not deny that; but to make things fit in with his theory and support his doctrines he says, "Uncultivated land is without value, because no human labour has been incorporated in it."

It might be thought that Marx considered uncultivated land had no value because it commands little, if

[1] "Capital," p. 65. [2] Ibid., p. 67. [3] Ibid., p. 75. [4] Ibid., p. 75.

any, price in unpopulated, newly-settled, or remote countries. He says, however, it has price but no value; which again is the very reverse of the truth, contrary to fact. Uncultivated land in vast quantities can be had in many parts of the world for nothing, and there is no doubt of its value; even here at home in our own Scotch Highlands crofters and farmers are generally allowed to take in any amount of uncultivated land they please rent free; such land has value but no price. There are many valuable things which, never having been sold, cannot be said to have price, but to say a thing which has price is without value is to state a paradox.

Moreover it is extraordinary that Marx should assert that uncultivated land has no value; land is valuable for so many other purposes than cultivation, of which not the least perhaps is the space afforded for exercise, recreation in fresh air, and the satisfaction of the æsthetic needs, all of which would be left unprovided for if "human labour had been incorporated in it," either by way of building or cabbage-growing. The great value of uncultivated land for the purposes of building and planting is too obvious for comment; and the high value of it for sport, although not recognised by Socialists, is an irrefutable truth which has not yet been eliminated from the category of facts, and will not be until human nature is radically different from what it is and ever has been.

It would be idle to dwell on all this were it not that the unfortunate statements of Marx pass muster, nay, pass as gospel and as science not only with the mass of persons interested in Socialism but also and principally with persons who are not illiterate, and who pride themselves on their learning and the superiority of

their intellect. No doubt they have their own ends and the success of Socialism in view. Marx and Socialism stand or fall together except in so far as Socialism can, and in all probability will, win its way to temporary victory by violence and the bold avowal of unmasked purposes; but although it may and will destroy everything it antagonises when it has the power to do so, even as it is now destroying trade by the strikes it organises, and as it partially destroyed the trade of the Port of London by its great Dock Strike, labour and labourers will not rule the world until Ability is dead.

England may go down, and all her mighty men, all who have made her great, will go down with her greatness if Marx and his doctrines are true and if Socialism should prevail; but in the meantime the fact must never be lost sight of that it is England, her high place among nations, her greatness and her wealth, that are assailed. She will assuredly be despoiled and go under if Socialistic doctrine prevail, although Socialism will never fill the place of her greatness; the acme of the greatness of Socialism is in Marx, whom the great crowd of great Socialist leaders feed upon, yielding up dilutions of Marx in every form—from learned volumes to pamphlets, newspapers, and large-typed leaflets—Marx, nothing but Marx, diluted Marx, disguised Marx, Marx everywhere; the zenith of the Socialist heavens is in Marx, its nadir is in the masses, the masses stirred by the prodding demagogue, in "the wolves, the wolves, you know," and the greatness of the future of England may be gauged by the greatness of the wolfish nature and of the doctrines of Marx.

But wolves, even with Marx and all the labour of the world at their back, will never take the place of genius;

they cannot rise to that throne because they are, by their own avowal, wolves, and have only what wolves have—strength and appetite. Ability will, however, rise again (even though too late to save) and put its foot upon their neck; and ability or genius, or whatever name that power may be called by to which labour now stands opposed, will in the end prevail, and will still and for ever be lord of all.

CHAPTER IX

MACHINERY

MACHINERY is denounced by Socialists, especially in their earlier writings, as one of the greatest evils of the world.

Mr. W. Morris says: "What machines really do is to reduce the skilled labourer to the ranks of the unskilled."

Mr. W. Clarke says: "The independent weaver was subjected like an amœba to a process of fission;" "the worker in a shoe-factory to-day is, so to speak, a machine."[1]

Mr. Belfort Bax says: "It is to machinery that we owe the polarisation of the wealth and poverty we see around us; luxury on the one hand and starvation on the other, colossal fortunes and abject misery . . ."[2]

Karl Marx says: "In agriculture, as in industry, the machine employs and enslaves the producer."[3]

"In manufacture, the workman uses a tool. In machinery, the workman is used by a machine."

"In manufacture, the movements of the tool proceed from him. In machinery he follows the movements of the machine."

"In manufacture, he is part of a living mechanism. In machinery, he is the living appendage of a lifeless mechanism."[4]

"Misery, chronic or acute. . . . If machinery seizes

[1] "Fabian Essays." [2] "Ethics of Socialism."
[3] "Student's Marx," p. 106. [4] Ibid., p. 89.

upon an industry by degrees, the resulting misery to the operatives competing against it is chronic. If machinery seizes upon an industry rapidly, the resulting misery to the operatives competing against it is acute. And as machinery is continually seizing upon new fields of production, its so-called 'temporary' effects are really permanent."[1]

"The instrument of labour strikes down the labourer."[2]

"Machinery not only acts as a competitor who gets the better of the workman, and is constantly on the point of making him superfluous. It is also a power inimical to him."[3]

One would have imagined after such denunciations (of which the foregoing are only a small part) that Socialists would certainly abolish machinery and make the abolition of it a primary feature in their regenerative system, and one of their first acts when they come to power. But no! the first thing they will do, so they say, will be to increase machinery!

The preceding abbreviated extracts give no adequate idea of their opinions, which can only be gathered from a perusal of their works. As will be seen, they identify machinery with factories and capital (against which there is nothing to say); but when, having done this, they hence conclude that the capitalist is the author of all the evils of smoke, ugliness, and misery, which they have depicted, and declare that all these evils will disappear and that England will again become a green garden with pure air everywhere and pure water, with no congestion of population, no ugly houses, as soon as the Socialist State is the capitalist and multiplies machinery, it becomes necessary to point out that the

[1] "Student's Marx," p. 90. [2] "Capital," p. 432 [3] Ibid., p. 436.

only difference that Socialism proposes to make is to endow the Socialist State with the profits the capitalist now draws; a great difference, no doubt, but not one which will make pure air or pure water, lessen the din or the noxious fumes, or the congregating, congested population, or restore "the independent weaver" who had been by a "process of fission" degraded to the position of a "hand" to any original superior position, or turn the dependent "machine-minder" into an artistic independent producer; "more machinery" will not turn "dismal hell-holes" into green trees and fields nor factories into Greek temples with never a chimney to belch foulness into the air and wither our woods and glades with soot and sulphur.

But having set workmen up in arms by dilating on these evils and horrors Socialists have become alive to the fact that machinery assists powerfully in the production of wealth, and attracted by this prospect, and animated by the hope of obtaining the great and ever-increasing wealth they have their eyes on, they decide that they will have more machines:

"By constructing more machines . . . we could produce far more wealth,"[1] and they declare that:

"The line of progress is to substitute machines for men."[1]

"Much of the most disagreeable and laborious work might" (under Socialism) "be done by machinery."[1]

"The extension of machinery is very likely to solve many of the problems."[1]

"In the very near future the skilled worker will not be the man who is able to perform a particular set of operations, but the man who has been trained in the use of machinery."[1]

[1] "Fabian Essays."

"The difference of trade will be in the machine rather than in the man."[1]

This is all very good, but it is also a singularly good illustration when taken in connection with the preceding anathemas of the different complexion Socialists put upon the self-same matters, and how very differently they present them when they themselves are interested from what they do when others are concerned.

Socialists say they will distribute the benefit which the capitalist now derives from machinery among the "amœbas," "the machine-minders," the "living appendages of the lifeless mechanisms" (even so it is extremely doubtful whether labour will receive much more than at present), but this will not alter the all-important fact that the man will be "subjected like an amœba to a process of fission," that "the workman is used by a machine" and "follows the movements of the machine," that he is degraded to be "the living appendage of a lifeless mechanism," and that "the machine employs and enslaves the producer," that, in Marx's own words, "the means of production employ the labourer."

Certainly the labourer does not employ the means of production, he uses them; they employ him, as Marx says. We do not employ our work; our work employs us. Where we differ here is in thinking this is as it should be and that it is not humiliating. And also in thinking that as the Socialist declares it humiliating and unhuman he ought not to continue it, much less to extend so atrocious a process to the whole human race, or to such portion of it as he can contrive to get into his power; and that he should not deceive and try to entrap people into giving him power to perpetuate this infamous process by leading them to

[1] C. Hart, "Constitutional Socialism."

think that machinery under their system will be quite different from what it is now, that it will be clean, smokeless, noiseless, harmless; that the beauty of Nature will not be spoilt by its increase; that it will not necesitate the collection of men in masses; in fact, that it will alter its nature completely, and instead of employing the men will allow the men to employ it and to develop their artistic and æsthetic tendencies instead of reducing the skilled to the unskilled and subjecting them to a dehumanising process of fission.

Should it, however, seem an injustice to interpret such statements as: "The means of production employ the labourer," as intended to convey inhuman wrongdoing and unjust humiliation, the following makes the matter clear: "Every kind of capitalist production, in so far as it is not only a labour process, but also a process of creating surplus value, has this in common, that it is not the workman that employs the instruments of labour, but instruments of labour that employ the workman . . . the instrument of labour confronts the labourer, during the labour process, in the shape of capital, of dead labour, that dominates and pumps dry living labour-power."

In the words dead labour that "dominates and pumps dry," the insult, the injury, the humiliation are all made quite clear.

Of course there is as usual here the saving clause (or what is intended to be a saving clause): "Capitalist production in so far as it is not only a labour process, but also a process of creating surplus value;" but it is in reality no saving clause at all, for the labour process, where machinery is concerned, will be the same, no matter under what system, as it is now, the instruments of labour will continue to employ the workman, and

the labourer will be confronted by the instrument of labour in the shape of capital, of dead labour, and he will still be engaged in a process of creating surplus value; the only difference under Socialism being that the capital will belong to the State (not to the labourer himself, as in the much be-lauded times of handloom weaving), and that the surplus value created (if any surplus value or anything more than the current expenses and wages does arise under the system of State-Capitalism) will be divided among the labourers. Nor does any promulgator of these doctrines make known that it is doubtful whether there would be much surplus to divide, nor that, judging from all precedent experience, the high probability is that there would not be.

One of the gravest charges made against us is that "the workman is used by a machine," that "he is the living appendage of a lifeless mechanism."[1]

Poor Marx evidently never had a lathe, and of course he never had a type-writer; Aveling doubtless had. It would have been a fine bit of wit on his part had he said to any friend who looked in on him when he was preparing his MSS. for press: "Here you see your friend 'being used by a machine;' alas! 'the living appendage of a lifeless mechanism'!"

It is true Marx makes a difference of degree in mechanism, a "distinction between man as mere motive power" and man as the workman or operator; but the contempt and hatred embodied in "the living appendage of a lifeless mechanism" are not plainer than the fact that there is no indication given of the point at which ignominy ceases to be the necessary corollary to machinery. Why if clerks using type-writers are not

[1] "Student's Marx."

living appendages to lifeless mechanisms should they be if a type-writer were invented of which they had only to turn a handle? Surely Marx's wife must have had a sewing-machine — how could he endure to see her "the living appendage of a lifeless mechanism"?[1] And his followers mean to make all men who come within their power the living appendages of lifeless mechanisms.

"What we shall probably do will be to instruct all our youth in the principles of machines and in the handling of machines."[2]

So, after all, the labourer under Socialism (and all men are to be labourers then) is to be turned from a man into an automaton; to be subject "like an amœba to a process of fission;" he is to be "enslaved" and "employed by the machine;" he is to be the "motive power of an implement machine," the "living appendage of a lifeless mechanism!"

Side by side together with the extremest anathematisation of machinery and glorification of Karl Marx, the intentions of Socialists to increase machinery to an unlimited extent are expressed in all their recent literature, and increasingly as the perception increases that, when the Socialist State comes into being, their "craving for wealth" will necessitate the increase of machinery, and that machinery will put into their hands the means of satisfying their desire.

All the horror and indignation that was felt at reducing a man to a sort of amœba and "subjecting him to a process of fission" are gone, the objection to reducing the skilled workman to the unskilled, to making him a mere machine-minder, to having him "enslaved," "used," or "employed by the machine," to making him the "living

[1] "Student's Marx," p. 89. [2] *Vide* Fabian Essayists.

appendage of a lifeless machine" disappears; there is no longer any pain in the thought of reducing a man to a machine appendage; when the prospect of wealth for the Socialist dawns on his view all these humanitarian sentiments, wherewith the cry against civilisation was got up, vanish.

We need no Socialist to tell us that those parts of the beautiful garden of England which have been blasted and made hideous with smoke and chimneys are veritable "hell-holes;" that the transformation of trees, grass, and hedges into furnaces and coal-sheds, and fresh air into noxious gases and clouds of blighting, suffocating smoke is well-nigh unendurable. All suffer from this hideousness, and if it goes on who knows how soon the whole country will be swallowed up in dense and devastating fumes. There is but little atmosphere and little sun now in our large smoke-enveloped towns; even the Queen of the North, which used to stand out so clear and crisp in her bright youth, is scarcely ever now seen but dimly, draped in fog and smoke; from London right on to the Highlands, whether by day or by night, there is a long hideousness of smoke and flame throughout the once fair land.

It is not to teach us this that Socialists denounce machinery; it is not to devise some amelioration of the evil; it is not to propose means for getting rid of it. Socialist writings may be searched in vain for a hint of any such means, for any way to abolish chimneys or to cleanse rivers; there is talk enough about pollution, and dirt, and factories, but not one single helpful idea, not one single practical proposal.

What we do find is a proposal for more machinery. "By constructing more machines (there is plenty of iron in the ground for that purpose) we could produce far

more wealth;"[1] and a plan for taking all the machinery there is from those to whom it belongs and handing it over to those to whom it does not belong. This is the Socialist's remedy: Hand over all your machinery to us and we will have more of it.

Mr. W. Morris does indeed tell us that factories will be as beautiful as the most beautiful buildings the world has ever seen; that coal-sheds, out-houses, and similar erections will all be equally beautiful; that there will be no dirt, smoke, fumes, nor noise, but that all will be as agreeable and clean as the most elegant drawing-room. That is so pleasant to hear and so easy to say, but we should like to know how it is to be done. If we were only told how of course we could do it at once. Why should humanitarians keep the secret of how to do it from us? why make bloodshed and revolution the price of the secret of such a blessing? Because they themselves do not know, and are incapable of grappling with the difficulty and of solving the problem.

If Socialists would only tell us how to do some of these things they would be useful and would be really then conferring benefits on mankind, and we should be grateful.

We are told a great deal about how to "get hold" of other people's property, but we are not told how to get rid of dirt or smoke or any other evil. No hint of how to reduce the hideous chimneys, to lessen the ugliness, to restore our green fields and woods, to turn the blackened wilderness into a flowery garden or cleanse our rivers; nothing but this is the way in which we will get hold of your property (and the directions given for this are very minute and very elaborate), and when we

[1] Annie Besant, "Fabian Essays."

have got it we will have more machinery (consequently fewer flowers, fields, and woods, and more wealth).

Mr. Ruskin, it is true, when he denounces these evils, tells us how to get rid of them, which is consistent; but his remedy is to abolish machinery altogether; he advises us not to wear machine-made goods, nor to travel in trains, but to revert to the methods in use before steam-power was discovered and put to use; we do not, however, find that any Socialist follows this great leader's advice or supports his views in practice.

Nunquam indeed says it would be a good plan to have a committee to consider smoke;[1] he probably does not know that some of the best heads are continually at work on this problem, and that there are constant inventions for the consumption of smoke, each inventor thinking he has come nearer the solution of the problem. Nor does he seem to know that a committee never yet invented anything, that all discoveries and inventions come from the brains of *individuals*, and, till now, Non-Socialist individuals, although Socialists have been *talking* ever since Rousseau. This is naturally very aggravating for Socialists, who detest individualism so much that instead of saying a man invented something they say: "he got hold" of it, as if he had laid violent hands on other people's property.

It must be equally annoying to them to reflect that while all inventions hitherto have come from Non-Socialists, Socialists even now produce nothing whatever but promises and castles in the air; and worse still, they have inferentially to admit that their system will not work until Non-Socialism has got all these good things ready for them. And this must be all the more aggravating as they set up labour

[1] "Merrie England."

at the expense of ability, and would like committees or communities to yield that which only individuals yield.

It is a pity, however, that they do not see that their plan for remedying the evils of machinery—1st. By handing it all over to the Socialist; 2nd. By having more of it; 3rd. By appointing Committees to consider smoke—will not abate smoke, noise, dirt, congestion, or remedy any of the evils we suffer from, because other people do see it, and would indeed hand a good deal over to any Socialist who would perform any of these promises now.

The Socialist does suggest, it is true, that water-power should be used instead of coal in the production of electricity. It is strange that he has never heard of Niagara and the Fall of Foyers, and of all the other water-power that is being used wherever it is available. When he does hear of it perhaps he will tell us he would not have disfigured Nature like the greedy Gradgrind.

The Socialist, moreover, seems to think that water and water-power are identical; he does not seem to know that although there are vast quantities of water in the world there is only an inadequate quantity of water-power, and that the use of coal and consequently the nuisance of smoke must continue until ability (in all probability Non-Socialistic) discovers how to generate heat and drive a turbine without either the use of water-power or coal.

We are not aware that Socialism has made any useful discovery, or done anything towards the solution of the problems which are in the grip of Non-Socialistic ability. We have not heard that any of the benefits connected with steam, machinery (and we must count even steam

and machinery benefits since Socialism is not only going to use them but increase them), or the smoke diminishing appliances which have been long in use have been contributed by Socialism.

It is easy to write fairy tales, make promises, and print in large type statements about the wickedness of people who use machinery and do not consume smoke; not so easy, but much more to the purpose to state what Socialists have done towards consuming their own smoke, acquiring their own coal without colliers, or the discoveries by which they have benefited a single creature.

Science and all the knowledge and appliances Non-Socialism has accumulated are as open to them as to us. Why do they not turn them to account, instead of heaping up plans for the appropriation of wealth? Let them say, as they are going to retain our machinery, how they are going to make it quiet and agreeable; how they are going to cleanse our rivers and keep them clean; how they are going to turn the "dismal hell-holes" into fields and forests; how they are going to house the millions all over the land and have every man near to his work without more smoke-diffusing locomotion; how they are going to have more machinery and more factories and, at the same time, more fields and more trees. Instead of reviling us and declaring that they are going to do all this why do they not explain their discoveries? and if they have not discovered how to do it why do they promise to do what they are utterly incapable of performing?

It is highly probable, nay, certain, that not one Socialist knows how smoke may be consumed, how machinery can be worked without noise, or how con-

gested population can be housed as desired, more factories be erected and more machinery brought into use without cutting down more trees and spoiling more lanes and fields. Yet they promise all these impossibilities.

They might just as truthfully tell the working-man that if he will seize all they want him to seize they will show him mines of gold where now he digs for coal as soon as all their labour and all the wealth of others is at their command.

If Socialists were to apply themselves to some of the problems we have not solved with regard to machinery, *e.g.*, how to make machinery noiseless and cleanly, to wait upon itself instead of requiring "machine-minders," to make it take up less space, and not require coal and oil, they would prove themselves more capable and useful men than by reprobating others because they have not solved them. But their intense determination to appropriate the machinery which belongs to others, and the promises concerning it which they have not the slightest intention of fulfilling, not even having yet acquired the knowledge of how these things could be done, can scarcely win them credit even with those honest and capable labourers who have a knowledge of machinery and its requirements and who think out such matters for themselves. Unfortunately, however, thinkers are extremely rare compared to those masses of mankind who never think at all for themselves but only accept what is told them with sufficient vigour without any examination whatever; and this it is which makes the Socialist's denunciations and his proposals concerning machinery and other matters so fruitful of mischief and of persistent efforts by Trades' Unions to get the control of the employers' machinery into the labourers' hands.

CHAPTER X

MONOPOLY

As are wages, as is competition, as is machinery, so also to the Socialist mind is monopoly. These are all emanations of that evil thing, that curse, civilisation. Wages are a badge of slavery, competition is swindling, machinery is brutalising, monopoly is fraud. If Socialists have especially denounced one thing as more pernicious than another that thing is monopoly. Wages degrading, competition degrading, machinery degrading, but most of all is monopoly pernicious in all its effects. Yet, strange to say, under Socialism is monopoly to be the acme of desire.

Like machinery (for which also no denunciation was too strong) monopoly is to be increased, increased to the extent of embracing and swallowing up everything in its uncurtailed far-reaching arms; for Socialism if not monopoly is nothing. "A State monopoly is Socialism," says Nunquam in "Merrie England." Monopoly, that is to say, for *Socialists*, not for any one else. There is much hatred exhibited in Socialist writings, but this hatred of all monopoly that is not Socialistic monopoly is as clear, as fierce, as intense, as any of the other hatreds.

Private property of any sort (whether in land, money, machinery, or capital) and all inequalities (such as inequality of mind and capability, or of rank or con-

dition) are all alike hated as monopolies of something which Socialists have not, or which they wish to deprive others of. But the first thing we discover when we come to Socialist authorities is that the end and aim of the whole Socialist system is monopoly. Monopoly of everything! Monopoly of land, monopoly of wealth, monopoly of agriculture, monopoly of trade, monopoly of capital, monopoly of all the means of production, monopoly of labour, monopoly of production, monopoly of distribution, monopoly of class, monopoly of lawgiving, monopoly of everything that can be laid hands upon. Not, it is true, monopoly by individuals, or by co-operating individuals voluntarily uniting (for all that is voluntary is hateful to the Socialist mind), but monopoly by compulsion, by an oligarchy—the self-elected Socialist State.

That which is a vice under Liberty is a virtue under compulsion; that which is a virtue under a coercing State is a vice in individuals. Socialism will not tolerate or allow competition in any form, for it would interfere with monopoly and would render it impossible. The only way to institute universal monopoly is to abolish and prevent the possibility of competition, individual enterprise, and energy, which indeed were to be suppressed for other reasons also.

State monopoly can serve out whatever it pleases, at whatever price it pleases; if you do not like it, or its price, you may leave it and go without it, but you cannot go elsewhere and buy something less expensive, or that pleases you better. There is to be no choice; you must take that or nothing. That may be very convenient for the monopolist State; and Socialists, who alone are to be the bureaucrats under this Bureaucracy which they are contriving, of course will like it; it may suit them,

but for all that it will be as wasteful as it is certain to be injurious and unpleasant to every one else.

The Truck system was an odious monopoly and tyranny; it interfered with the liberty of the subject. A man was not only obliged to take his wages in kind instead of in coin (as he will also have to do under Socialism), but he was obliged to take whatever goods he required of a certain producer (as he will also have to do under Socialism). The consequence was that he not only had to take articles whether he liked them or not, but he had to pay a higher price than he would have paid elsewhere if he could have availed himself of the advantage of competing tradesmen. Working-men suffered by it; Socialists, who pose as the friend of the working-man, are unanimous in their denunciation of it; yet no sooner is it abolished than Socialists propose to make it one of the very corner-stones of their system; not partial truck, as by some individuals in some localities, but universal State-truck—no money at all, no wages, the earnings to be taken in kind from the general State-Store. The Truck system made the way easy for adulteration and fraud. When men are obliged to take anything that is offered by other men it will happen, as it generally does happen, that fraud and adulteration creep in.

Socialists profess to be better than other men; there is no proof that they are not, and of course no proof that they are; it is therefore possible that the effects of the Truck system will be very much the same under Socialistic Officialdom as under any other Officialdom; and it has not hitherto been found that men entrusted with absolute and universal power were more capable of judging of, and providing, what is good for others than those who were not entrusted with unlimited

monopoly; it can scarcely be any other than dangerous to give any set of men the monopoly of all your interests from the greatest to the smallest, although you may find it convenient to grant a Monopoly, properly safeguarded, of some particular interest.

Socialists are fond of pointing to the Post-Office as an instance of the excellence of State Monopoly, but Mr. Herbert Spencer has shown that there is not so much excellence about it as to superficial observers there seems to be. He points out that it is purely a distributive business, and that it is not better done by the State than it was done by the individuals who originated it; that although it yields revenue, it would under individual management probably yield much more; that it is one of those few undertakings which is particularly suitable for State management; that distribution is very much simpler than production, not demanding the many much rarer capabilities which are necessary for successful production; that a successful monopoly of distribution by no means implies success in monopoly of production; and he has further shown that States are always extravagant in management; that as economy is not the interest of any one in particular it is not paid so much attention to as the individual (with whom it is a vital interest) pays to it.

When the individual combines and organises, the single eye, the single mind, perceives advantageous adjustments of one part with another which it is impossible the numerous minds of numerous officials (each comprehending the portion which is in his particular sphere but without any cohesion, without any liberty or mandate to interfere with or regulate anything in the other departments which do not fall within

his province) could arrange if even they perceived and grasped what was required in a sphere beyond their ordinary limits. Competition has hitherto been found to be the only counteracting influence to the disadvantages, or the abuses, of monopoly. It has been observed that when people are free to take their choice and supply themselves where they like and with what they like they are not only more satisfied, and as a rule more prosperous, but that much pains is taken to supply them in the best possible manner with what they require, and to offer them every conceivable variety at every conceivable price, thus suiting every diverse taste and convenience.

This, of course, is not consonant with training in equality. Hence Socialists do not desire that men should seek to satisfy their individual taste and do the best they can for themselves, nor that other *individuals* should strive to supply their needs or satisfy them; their principal object is to stifle and repress individual needs, energy, and development; their next is to supply every one themselves with what commends itself to them, to their judgment, tastes, and desires.

Therefore the wish to help one's self, the struggle to satisfy desire, is to be eliminated. Self-help is odious to the Socialist mind, and individual action generates the spirit of competition. Competition in the Socialist gospel is almost as great a curse as civilisation; its only antidote is monopoly — monopoly not only to render individual development unnecessary but to prevent it.

Under universal monopoly there is nothing to strive for. You are to do the work that is allotted to you, and the ordering and allotment of such work the State is to have the monopoly of; and you are to be pro-

vided with everything the State thinks you require, for which, however, you are to pay with the money you have earned.

There is an old adage which every one is acquainted with: If you want a thing well done, do it yourself. And every one in his own experience knows that, especially in the spending of money, or in the supply of personal necessaries, no one else ever does do this for us as well as we do it for ourselves, be he ever so honest and painstaking, taste and judgment being as various as they are under Non-Socialism. There are naturally instances, and indeed frequent ones, where the parties are so closely allied in interests, in taste, and in knowledge of each other, that one can supply the requirements of the other almost as well as if they were his own. But usually and universally people not only like to supply themselves, but think they can do it better than any one else. What then is to become of them under an universal monopoly? They will never be allowed a choice of taking their wages in kind or in coin; they will have to take whatever is in the State store whether they like it or not, and such things only will be supplied as the State thinks necessary. Indeed, the whole question of monopoly in relation to Socialism resolves itself into a question of liberty or tyranny, a free nation or an enslaving despotism.

Again, before the repeal of the corn laws, who were louder in denunciation of Protection than Socialist agitators? Protection was a partial monopoly in defence of the agriculture at home. It was a monopoly in corn and food and other necessary supplies by the nation. By Protection foreigners were not allowed to compete on the same terms with Englishmen in

English markets. Socialists, and those who were not agriculturists or manufacturers, denounced this monopoly as an iniquitous oppression of the masses in favour of the agricultural and manufacturing classes. It was in reality the suppression of foreign competition for the benefit (as it was then considered) of British industry. Socialists and others would not have it so; foreign corn was to compete with English produce. Experts knew that England (apart from the importance to her in certain contingencies of as large a home supply of food as possible) could never compete successfully with all the rest of the world in agricultural produce, more favourable climates and virgin soil being thrown into the scale against her. They were not listened to; national monopoly in corn and food stuffs was abolished, and the soil of England has been going gradually out of cultivation ever since.

Experts had not only foreseen this, but had also, till they were weary, insisted that it was expedient that England should as far as possible feed herself, in order to be independent in time of war or in case of emergency, even if men did pay a little more, or a good deal more, for their bread.

No! said the so-called friends of the working-man; the poor must have cheap bread. So cheap bread there has been, and cheap meat and cheap butter and cheap everything, till but little wheat is grown in Great Britain, and land that used to grow corn now grows nothing but weeds.

Then up gets our Socialist agitator again and says: Take your cheap things away; we don't want cheap things; it is better for the working-man to buy dear things. Away with competition. Let us grow our own corn. Let bread be dearer. Give us power and

we will have a Monopoly.[1] Let England alone feed Englishmen. It can very well do it. Let us only get the Government into our hands and we will have a monopoly of all the land, all the agriculture, all the bread, and of everything else there is for sale. When once we obtain a monopoly of everything, everything that appertains to the individual life and the family, we will by means of it regulate not only the number of the family and the size of the house but also prices and wages, and what people are to eat and drink, and how they are to be clothed. And this huge and complete Truck system we will call State Monopoly.

Thus the working-man, whose whole being is steeped in competition, who is nothing if not emulative and competitive, trusting to alluring predictions and promises will make under Socialism his first trial of real Truck. For "a State monopoly is Socialism."

[1] "Merrie England," Nunquam.

CHAPTER XI

LIBERTY

And what is to be said of liberty? Men have preached of it, sung of it, fought for it, died for it. But one thing only is to be said of it here; and that is, that it does not inhere in Socialism. It is scarcely pretended, as far as can be seen, that it does; there is an intimation that a higher, truer, sort of liberty than we have any idea of is to emerge later out of a rigorous system of repression and compulsion; but as no one is ever to be allowed to do as he likes with his own, with himself or with his own life, it is difficult to see where his liberty will be, nor is this pointed out by any Socialist. There are promises of nearly everything that can be thought of as attractions, but liberty is not promised, and very little is said about it. It is evidently not wanted, and could not be had coincidently with the measures proposed by Socialists if it were.

This, at least, among all the vagueness and contradictions is plain: that there is to be no liberty anywhere under Socialism. If all men are to live under enforced equality of condition, if all are to be compelled to produce the necessaries of life under penalty of starvation, if no one is allowed to do or have anything different from every other, nor to possess anything which might be useful to the community, nor which others might desire to have, nor to use anything he has in

the way he sees fit, or to spend his money in any way the State disapproves, it is clear that there can be no liberty whatever—no liberty of choice, no liberty of action; and there is to be no liberty of the press, for, as we have seen, the Socialist State is to be the sole printer and publisher.

The individual is free at present in all these things, although there has been lately a good deal of dictatorial interference, which even Strikers and members of Trades Unions have not found quite to their liking. Liberty to oppress is bad, and oppression is bad, whosoever oppresses; but although there may be individual instances of oppression where all are free, which for the individual may sometimes be as hurtful as general oppression, the hurtfulness is modified by the sympathy aroused by the certainty of their cessation, and by their limited and localised character; they can never occasion the same amount of misery and hopelessness as the oppression of a whole nation by the State; nor are individual instances of oppression as harmful in their results as the bondage of a whole nation.

Moreover, any falling short from a high standard is much less injurious than living under a legalised low one. Men who think themselves injured even to the most grievous extent by competition still consider themselves fortunate to have been born in England and to suffer under English government; and we find German disseminators of Socialism, disaffection, and sedition, preferring life and work in England to residence in their own country, which is strange, considering how Germans revile us and our England; nor do we ever see them taking refuge in Russia. Thus the oppression imputed to Capitalism and Individualism is found,

even by these, to be much less baneful than the interference or oppression of the State, and Individualism better than Bureaucracy and Officialdom.

Everything that has use being liable to abuse, the choice hitherto has been, and will always be, between, on the one hand, individuals agreeing and disagreeing among themselves and governing themselves in their daily lives as nearly as may be, and, on the other hand, being governed by Officialdom. Foreign Socialists seem to have made their choice in coming to England instead of going to the Mormon and Socialistic States in America and elsewhere, all of which hold out, we should imagine, enormous advantages to men of Socialistic views; and except that they would be the governed instead of the governors, as they hope to be here, life for them there would be almost exactly the same as life under Socialism here in the future. But while taking refuge in a country where it is considered there is more liberty than anywhere else, they raise a hue and cry against the liberty we have, and which our system assures to us, and which they come and eagerly avail themselves of while trying to destroy it in order to set up an Officialdom more complete than any European or Oriental tyranny has as yet devised.

This, however, is not so strange as that Englishmen should take their cue and follow their lead, and try to pull down and trample under foot their own country and all its institutions. In Russia we see an unmodified despotism, not, however, the despotism of one man, as in the Asiatic Khanates, but of a number, of an Oligarchy—a Bureaucracy. It is no more impossible for Officialdom or a Bureaucracy to govern well than it is for Socialistic Officialdom to govern ill. And that Socialists try to induce us to put ourselves

in the power of their Officialdom on the ground that they are better than other men and that their views are more advantageous to mankind, only evokes the thought that there are Pharisees who thank Heaven publicly that they are not as other men are. To say that if Humanity, or the English, appoint Socialists as their chosen governors it is tantamount to governing themselves and is a guarantee of liberty is not at all true; for being governed by a State formed of Socialists is not the people governing themselves, but is only that the portion of them who are Socialists choose Socialists to govern them; the rest, probably the majority, having no voice whatever in the matter, but, on the contrary, being governed by those to whom they are diametrically opposed. Thus it would be a tyranny from which liberty would be entirely absent. The individual under Socialism is professedly to be subordinated to Society and the State.[1]

When Government departs from its proper duties, and meddles with, and tries to regulate, such matters as the Socialist proposes it shall regulate, liberty ceases, and it is of no consequence whether the Officialdom call itself a Bureaucracy, a Despotism, or Government by a Socialistic majority, *i.e.*, a government put into office and maintained in it by a majority of foreigners and others calling themselves Socialists. It matters not at all to individuals or to the country what the name of the thing is, what sort of Officialdom it calls itself, if it is Officialdom and foreign Bureaucracy; Socialism, by the account it gives of itself, is

[1] "What Socialism means by 'society' is merely an aggregate or majority of individuals, assumed to be entitled to suppress individual liberty in order to obtain, as far as possible, equality of individual enjoyment."—*Professor Flint*, "*Socialism*."

essentially this. Officialdom is disliked because it interferes in matters which people like to arrange for themselves; they may not always like the way in which things go when they do them for themselves, but they do not want to have everything done for them, nor to have the liberty to act for themselves taken from them. It is quite possible things might be very much better done than they are, but even the less capable sufferers prefer to have it so than to have the liberty taken from them of arranging their own affairs. This is proved by the fact of the English Socialist never taking refuge in Russia or Germany.

Moreover, if Government is to regulate such affairs as the Socialist proposes the enforcement of rigorous and inquisitorial measures will be necessitated, and a pernicious system, breeding and developing evil and which will never be maintained except by methods destructive of liberty even in those very things in which men most desire to be free, will have to be imposed, and too late men will find themselves saddled with a system direr in effect than any casual individual oppression, or any abuse of individual liberty.

Officialdom also having a deteriorating effect upon those who carry such measures out lessens the chance of good government in matters which are the special province of government.

But baneful as Bureaucracies are they leave the individual such a measure of liberty as would be quite annihilative of Socialistic government; they leave him freedom to contract, the value and desirability of which, touching as it does the most intimate relations of life, cannot be whittled away by any Socialistic special pleading, and they protect him in the contract he has made; only the feeble in intellect,

the incapable, are unfit to contract, and the interference of Government, or its abstention from the necessary protection of the contracting parties and of the contract when made, can only mean the development and perpetuation of the incapable.

Foreign Despotisms and Bureaucracies leave men free to marry, to bring up and educate their children, and to guide them and nourish them as they please. They leave men free to earn their bread as they choose, and to do what they like with their earnings and their savings.

All these liberties Socialism proposes to deprive them of:—

1st. Of freedom of contract, because it would interfere with equality of condition; because it would interfere with the monopoly which Socialists intend to have of everything; because it would perpetuate marriage, which would confound and entirely destroy the arrangements which are necessary for the maintenance of Socialism.

2nd. Of the liberty to bring up and educate their children, because if their children are not brought up by the Socialistic State, Socialism would encounter insuperable difficulties and inevitably run serious risk of being speedily overturned.

3rd. Of the liberty to earn their bread as they choose, because compulsion to manual labour, to what the State thinks necessary work, is essential to Socialism.

4th. And of the liberty to do what they like with their earnings, because they would interfere with the Socialist's monopoly by using them profitably in commerce, in agriculture, and in production generally; and also because they would supply themselves with articles which might nullify equality of condition.

"Socialism of its very nature so absorbs and obliterates the individual in the society as to sacrifice his liberty and individuality. This is its differential feature . . . it assigns to society authority to do whatever it deems for its own good with the persons, faculties, and possessions of individuals. It undertakes to relieve individuals of what are manifestly their own moral responsibilities, and proposes to deprive them of the means of fulfilling them. It would place the masses of mankind completely at the mercy of a comparatively small and highly centralised body of organisers entrusted with such powers as no human hands can safely or righteously wield."[1]

Socialism would, if it were instituted, come to a speedy end if any atom of freedom existed, because freedom would render monopoly and equality impossible. Freedom, equality, and State monopoly, it is evident, cannot co-exist, and as Socialism cannot exist without equality and State monopoly freedom must disappear.

It matters comparatively but little to a man whether his home be a castle or a cottage if he has within it what he prizes most—liberty—liberty and safety from State oppression and from foreign oppression. The liberty that is enjoyed abroad is not what the English call liberty, nor indeed is it what those numerous foreigners who take refuge here call liberty; but not only are the Socialist's arrangements for equality of condition and State monopoly incompatible with freedom, but his intention to put the majority of Englishmen (what he calls the "count-of-heads majority," obviously the working-men among others) under the domination of a foreign tyranny, if it suits his purpose so to do, is

[1] Flint, "Socialism," p. 364.

as opposed to the idea of liberty as it is possible for anything to be.

Mr. Belfort Bax says: "It might then be a matter of life and death for Socialist Germany to forestall a military and economic isolation in the face of a reactionary European coalition by immediate action, especially against the stronghold of modern commercialism" (England). "Should such an invasion of the country take place, it would be the duty of every Socialist to do all in his power to assist the invaders to crush the will of the count-of-heads majority of the people of England."[1]

Thus if Germany, under given circumstances, invaded England, Socialists and those whom they influence would do their best "to crush the will of the majority of the people of England" with the help obviously of English working-men as against their fellow working-men and countrymen generally. Whosoever might be living under the Government of the Socialist State (whether working-men, the clergy calling themselves Christian Socialists, or others) would be expected, and by Socialist law would be bound, to help the invader to crush the will of the people of England.

This is what the Socialist calls liberty.

The foregoing is one of the most important contributions the Socialist has made towards enlightening those who say there will be liberty under Socialism and those who think that such far-reaching constitutional power in the parish, in the County Council, in the franchise, as is now enjoyed, may safely be intrusted to men who have Socialistic tendencies, and to those who think Socialistic legislation is right and safe.

The same author throws some light upon how much liberty Socialists are likely to grant when he pro-

[1] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Socialism."

claims the intention of Socialists of "trampling on this majority." Deliberately to formulate the intention of trampling on a majority is not consonant with the English idea of liberty.

"The practical question finally presents itself: What is the duty of the convinced Socialist towards the present mechanical majority—say of the English nation—a majority mainly composed of human cabbage-stalks, the growth of the suburban villa and the slum respectively? The answer is: Make use of it whenever possible without loss of principle, but where this is not possible, disregard it. The Socialist has a distinct aim in view. If he can carry the initial stages towards its realisation by means of the count-of-heads majority, by all means let him do so. If, on the other hand, he sees the possibility of carrying a salient portion of his programme by trampling on this majority, by all means let him do this also."[1]

There is not much idea of liberty here.

Add to this that other important declaration, that "the only will of the majority, which has any sort of claim on the recognition of the Socialist in the present day, is that of the majority of those who have like aspirations with him . . . in other words, the will of the majority of the European Socialist party;"[2] and it becomes clear that the intended and planned tyranny would be a particularly odious one.

And these sentiments prove (if proof be needed) that not only do patriotism and liberty count for less than nothing with Socialists but that legislation which tends to place wealth and power in the hands of such a party, or in the hands of persons favouring or tolerating such ideas, as also all legislation proposed or favoured by

[1] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Socialism." [2] Ibid.

such persons, imperils "the stronghold of modern freedom"—imperils England and England's liberty.

"A State Collectivism in which the unqualified conception of an 'organism' logically lands us, by restraining the free activity of each self-conscious personality, strikes not only at the liberty of the citizen in the vulgar acceptation of the term 'liberty,' but cuts off at the fountain-head the spring of the entire spiritual life of man. It is profoundly immoral; for, with free activity must perish all that distinguishes man from animals, and all must go in religion, philosophy, literature, and art by which human life has been exalted and dignified. . . . An organised and consistent Collectivism would, like an absolute paternal despotism, be the grave of distinctive humanity."[1]

Not only does Socialism aim at destroying liberty as we ordinarily understand and prize it but it destroys the very possibility of it, together with the possibility of all higher, spiritual, or intellectual life.

"Contemporary Socialism desires to serve itself heir to the Absolutism of past ages. The spirit is identical with that of all despotisms. It seeks to deify itself, and means to brook no resistance to its will. The Socialist in saying *L'Etat c'est moi* will only give expression to the thought which animated the first tyrant. If Socialism can impregnate and inspire the Democracy of our time with this spirit, society in the near future will lie under the oppression of a fearful despotism."[2]

This near future we are swiftly approaching; the people are to a very great extent already inspired by this pernicious spirit; we see it forcibly exhibited in the conduct of the Trades-Unions in all their actions, especially in

[1] S. S. Laurie, "Ethics," p. 227. [2] Flint, "Socialism," p. 335.

the way the Non-Unionist workmen are treated by those who wish to compel them to act as the Union orders; they are not allowed to do as they wish, to work when, and where, and for what wages they will; their tools are broken and they themselves suffer personal ill-treatment and injury. This of course our present laws are supposed not to allow, but it takes place notwithstanding, and the organisers and perpetrators of this far-reaching and deliberately organised intimidation and tyranny seem for the most part to go scot-free, and to suffer no punishment whatever, instead of undergoing such severe penalties as would not only effectually protect the person but also the principle of liberty which is so audaciously and perniciously injured, and which, being thus continually wounded, imperils the very stability of our Constitution and Empire, as indeed it is intended it should.

"Our high position," it has been truly said, "has an underside to it of terrible menace; as in Ancient Athens the Cave of the Furies was underneath the rock on whose top sat the Court of the Areopagus. The Socialism of our day is a real Cave of the Furies. And the Furies are not asleep in their Cave."[1]

This is no exaggerated view; it is supported by every Socialistic utterance. Mr. Belfort Bax says: "The foreign policy of the great International Socialist party must be to break up those hideous race monopolies called empires, beginning in each case at home. Hence everything which makes for the disruption of and disintegration of the empire to which he belongs must be welcomed by the Socialist as an ally."[2]

Disruption and disintegration of the Empire then is what is aimed at. Laws and liberty are alike being

[1] R. D. Hitchcock, "Socialism," p. 1.
[2] "Religion of Socialism," p. 126.

rapidly undermined and captured, and the Socialistic tendency of legislation is becoming daily stronger and more helpful to these designs.

The rapidly growing tendency of legislation (as Mr. Herbert Spencer points out in "Man *versus* the State") has been for a long time in the direction of paternal government, of curtailing and prescribing, so much so as to make it a question at what point this is to cease. If attention is not given to this in time, if legislators neglect now to reflect, to decide, and to retrace their steps, they may find when too late that they have lost their liberty and their power to do so, which liberty and power it may cost them their heart's blood to win back, if even it is possible ever to regain them. If liberty is not jealously guarded, and now, if need be, fought for by all daily in every walk of life, from the statesman right away down through every class to every coerced and deluded member of every Trades Union (and who knows how many in these Unions rebel and regret, and even curse their bonds, and only go on allowing themselves to be coerced because they are too weak to resist and because it is too late to retrace their steps?); if all those who feel their liberty invaded do not make a stand against the invasion of their threatened freedom and rise up in defence of it; if those who know that it is threatened in the laws that have been passed, in the laws which may at any time pass, if they do not now stay the foe, then will that foe, though he be of his own household, drive back and speedily crush that England which drove back the Armadas of Spain and crushed Napoleon.

[1] "Certainly no country in the world would have so desperate a task devolved upon it as our own were Socialism to become either the creed or the ideal of the masses of our population."—*Professor Flint, "Socialism in England."*

CHAPTER XII

RELIGION

THE Socialist tells us that the working-man has no religion; that "the idea of a holy working-man is even grotesque;" that as a rule he has never "paid much attention to his soul;" that "personal holiness" has never been his ethical aim, and that he will commonly tell you he has "no time to trouble about his soul." Also that "the working classes have for the most part, in so far as they think about the matter, frankly renounced the old theology."[1] This is doubtless the reason—as it is to the working-man that the Socialist principally addresses himself for support, considering him more necessary to his scheme than any other—why he has hitherto been so frank in the expression of his opinions about religion.

But here, as elsewhere, the *expression* of Socialistic sentiments in popular literature is undergoing modification. Inquiries are being made which it is necessary to deal with apparently by the very class who were supposed to be so devoid of religion that it was grotesque to use any word indicative of it in connection with them. For the instruction of the general public and to ward off the reproach which frank speech on the part of Socialistic authorities may bring to Socialism, a supposed allegation is made in a Socialistic catechism: "Most Socialists are Freethinkers;" and this meets

[1] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Socialism."

with the answer: "Yes, because most clergymen misrepresent Socialism."[1] There is no proof given that they do or that there is any misrepresentation; but it is a curious reason to give for disbelief or renouncement of belief—that because a man is misrepresented by some other individual he ceases to believe in the doctrines which he formerly considered essential to his eternal salvation.

The logic of the statement renders its accuracy questionable. But whatever may be the reason or the apology for this avowed infidelity and irreligion, the undeniable fact remains that Socialism and religion are antagonistic to each other and cannot co-exist together in the same system.

Professor Flint says: "Contemporary Socialism, viewed as a whole, unquestionably rests on a non-religious conception of the universe, and is plainly inconsistent with any recognition of religious duty, in the ordinary acceptation of the term."[2]

It would not be necessary to prove this, by Socialists, generally accepted fact were not the tone of some of the Socialistic popular literature, journals, and newspapers occasionally thought by many to be uncertain on this point and capable of a different construction, and were it not for those whom the Socialist contemptuously calls "that singular hybrid the Christian Socialist."[3]

That person, however, is not singular, although he is peculiar, but exists in very large numbers; he shares disciples and converts with Socialists, and while leading over to Socialism vast numbers who would never go

[1] C. Hart, "Constitutional Socialism."
[2] "Socialism," p. 370.
[3] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Socialism."

down that road but for him he retains others under his more moderate influence, for which presumably, and for other reasons, he is intensely disliked by Socialists who will have nothing to do with him or with anything connected with Christianity.

The Christian Socialist misrepresents Socialism and libels Christianity when he says that they are identical or similar. Professor Flint points out that all that is Socialistic in the Christian Socialist's teaching is not Christian, and all that is Christian is not Socialistic.

The antagonistic dissimilarity of Christian and Socialist doctrine is clear if only a few points are contrasted. Jesus Christ counselled voluntary renunciation and self-denial, but He never enjoined compulsion, nor expropriation, nor the appropriation of the goods of others for the public welfare, no matter how these were originally acquired; nor did He approve of self-indulgence and a life of physical and material satisfactions, but bade us look for our good things in the future of another world, where alone, He declared, all tears would be dried, where alone there would be mansions for all, where the wicked would cease from troubling and the weary be at rest. It is exactly these Christian doctrines which the Socialist denounces; they are not at all his doctrines; Socialism teaches indeed the very reverse, and declares that this hope of a glorious resurrection, this indemnification for the ills of time, for the struggle, self-denial, and conquest of material desires, is at the bottom of all the mischief our civilisation causes. Its doctrine is that these are pernicious fallacies, and that if men were not nursed in them they would recognise that the satisfaction of this mortal body is all we have to live for; and that being rid of this delusive creed of immortality we

should devote all our energies to the satisfaction of earthly desires and the perfection of our present state, and thus be more successful in producing a civilisation of a higher sort than any we have yet striven after; and the Socialist avers that we are retarded on our way to this his higher life by the depreciative spirit which the idea of a never-to-be-attained immortality inspires.

There are no doubt some Socialists who, whether from policy or sentiment, are desirous that this antagonism between Socialism and Religion should not be proclaimed so loudly, and that some means should be devised whereby some sort of apparent reconciliation might be arrived at; but Professor Flint, while pointing out that "Christian Socialism will always be found to be either unchristian in so far as it is socialistic, or unsocialistic in so far as it is truly and fully Christian,"[1] says: "While professing to preserve Religion, they in reality suppress it. They would abolish current antagonisms by sacrificing the spirit to the flesh, and the 'other world' to this world; by denying God and deifying humanity. The identification of Socialism and Religion at which they arrive assumes the identity of Religion and Atheism."[2]

It is so clear, however, that Socialism must get rid of creeds and of religion, and so equally clear that the task will not be an easy one, that a substitute has been invented which is offered to mankind under the name of Religion. It is akin to the Religion of Humanity of Auguste Comte, although different from it: it is the Religion of Social Mundane Welfare.

Mr. Belfort Bax says the religion of the Socialist looks, "not to another world, but to another and higher social life in this world," that it is in "the struggle for

[1] "Socialism," p. 441. [2] Ibid., p. 433.

this higher social life . . . that the Socialist finds his ideal, his religion."[1]

The Socialist's system is founded upon the doctrine of expropriation, compulsion, and material well-being; and his contempt for the Christian Socialist arises from his surprise that what he so plainly says is so little known and understood by those who adopt his appellation; he maintains that "the association of Christianism with any form of Socialism is a mystery rivalling the mysterious combination of ethical and other contradictions in the Christian Divinity himself." He declares the "religion of the Socialists is that of human welfare," and that their doctrine is "its attainment through human solidarity."[2] This ought to be enough for any Christian Socialist.

The Socialist, speaking *ex cathedra*, always explains himself quite clearly on this point, as the following will show: "Protestant Individualism in England . . . in religion rehabilitated the devil, and the doctrines of original sin and the damnable danger of reason and good works." "According to Christianity . . . regeneration must come from within. The ethic and religion of modern Socialism, on the contrary, look for regeneration from without, from material conditions and a higher social life."[3] "Of the humanity whose religion is human welfare . . . whose doctrine is its attainment through human solidarity, or, in other words, Socialism, only those, we repeat, will ever obtain the ear of the Orient, and never they who come in the hated and blood-stained name of Christianity—name indicative of racial and religious rivalry."[4]

[1] "Religion of Socialism," p. 52.
[2] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Socialism," p. 52.
[3] Ibid., p. 19. [4] Ibid., p. 55.

Does this not seem as blasphemous to the Christian Socialist as it does to the ordinary Christian? does it not sound as hideous in his ears?

And again the same author tells us, "The highest expression of Socialist morality, Socialist religion, is, of course, the readiness to sacrifice all, including itself, for the cause. What, for instance, though they may show the doctrine of vicarious atonement to have its roots in a bestial superstition pertaining to the worst side of paganism, a superstition which has borne cruelties . . . innumerable in the world's history as its fruit—the foul doctrine, with the rest of the system of which it forms a typical part, will continue to be fulminated every week from a thousand pulpits."[1]

How is it that the Christian Socialist can stand on the same platform and give his hand to the utterers and promulgators of such sentiments?

"As already hinted, modern Christianity is a mere coagulation of 'blessed words,' as any one may convince himself by listening to a sermon any Sunday morning. For instance, the darker sides of savage ritual surviving in the Christian dogma of the atonement, the efficacy of blood, washing with blood, &c., would strike the wives and daughters of the suburban villa as very nasty if they fully realised what it meant."[2]

"Even the 'blood of Jesus,' sin, holiness, &c., were not as now mere jingle. If we personify, we have *Dieu l'ennemi*. If we do not personify, we have no *Dieu*, but then we have no *ennemi*."[3]

Does the Christian Socialist agree?

What has the Christian Socialist in common here, on this vital point, with the Socialist? It is not, of

[1] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Socialism," p. 43.
[2] Ibid., p. 123. [3] Ibid., p. 133.

course, necessary that those who take others by the hand to call themselves by the same name and work with them in a common cause should agree on every point, or even on most points, if they are one with them upon the inviolability, in such work, of that which they hold highest, most sacred; but it is necessary that they should not join hands with any man working to destroy that which they are bound to uphold, and which cannot be upheld if the aim of the promoter of the common work is to undermine and sap the foundations of the edifice they have sworn to defend.

"With this sham, moreover" (religion), "its accompanying morality is also stupid. . . . This is clung to with a determination or even ferocity natural enough, since its aim is the perpetuation of individual property in wealth, in workman, in wife, in child."[1]

"The present marriage system is based upon the general supposition of the economic dependence of the woman on the man, and the consequent necessity for his making provision for her, which she can legally enforce. This basis would disappear with the advent of Social economic freedom, and no binding contract would be necessary between the parties as regards livelihood, while property in children would cease to exist;"[2] —our modern bourgeois property marriage "is to give place to kindly and human relations between the sexes."[3]

Does the Christian Socialist think all these views and doctrines less important than those in which he does agree with the Socialist? Can the Christian place anything above the sacredness of his creed?

Can he weigh anything in the scale with the distin-

[1] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Socialism," p. 205. [2] Ibid.
[3] William Morris and Belfort Bax, "Socialism."

guishing features of his religion of which the institution of marriage, as regards mundane affairs, is the principal?

"Under a Socialistic system contracts between individuals would be free and unforced by the community. This would apply to the marriage contract as well as others, and it would become a matter of simple inclination. . . . Nor would a truly enlightened public opinion, freed from mere theological views as to chastity, insist on the permanently binding nature."[1]

Now, it occurs to the ordinary layman that such sentiments and opinions as these concerning his creed, its Deity, and the divine institution of marriage, must be shocking to the feelings of all those who believe in, and cling to, the doctrines of Christianity, and that the Church and all believers would pronounce them blasphemous; and the question arises: how could such believers and their Church exist under a government of which the sole motive of its supporters in the struggle which brought them to power was to give effect to their views in the institution of a civilisation which, they declare, would be hindered and made impossible by the doctrines and creeds they denounce? Such a government, at the best, would be in the position of that of ancient Rome which, while having no proselytising tendencies, and consequently no plans of religious persecution, felt itself continuously face to face with a body of men whose religious views it considered contravened, thwarted, and made impossible the even tenour of its life and rule. What the result of this was in Rome we know. The head of a portion of the followers of the despised "Galilean," it is true, even now sits enthroned in the city of the Cæsars; but before this transformation in the imperial capital was consummated,

[1] "Socialism."

before the conquered converted their conquerors, they were thrown wholesale to wild beasts; they had to be got rid of by a tolerant, splendidly powerful and distinctly non-persecuting State; the conqueror was proudly indifferent, his government was the most magnificent the world had known, and the most enlightened and civilised. Paganism was too haughty to proselytise; it was careless as to what other men believed. The Christians were not aggressive, they were comparatively few in number, they were weak, humble, and unwarlike; yet powerful Rome could devise no way of subsisting with Christianity; its rule could not continue, its State could not live with Christians in its midst; the life of each one was too different from that of the other, too opposed in its aims, views, tastes, opinions. The life of the Christians and its silent influence on the one side and that of Imperialism on the other were incompatible; therefore away with the Christians, away with them to the lions! And to the lions they went. The way that Christians went under Imperial Rome is very much the way they would go under Socialism; there might be no lions, it is true, but there would be something equally effective for getting rid of them.

What Rome with its intellect, its cheerful toleration of everything at all compatible with power and existence, its grandeur and liberality of mind, its freedom from prejudice, littleness, and rancour, its vast resources of governmental experience, could not do, it is not likely Socialists could effect, nor as regards Christianity would wish to effect, for they declare they hate it and that it would counteract their plans. Nor are Christians to-day likely to sit down tamely under conquest, or to submit as the early Christians submitted in the presence of the irresistible legions of Rome.

It is strange that the Christian Socialist does not ask himself how he and his Church could exist under a government composed of men holding the views concerning Christianity and its effects which Socialists hold, and stranger still that he can find common ground whereon to stand with men who call his cherished doctrines, his divine creed, "foul," "bestial," "nasty," "hated," "blood-stained." Most persons would agree with the Socialist when he declares that "it is difficult to divine the motive for thus preserving a name" (Christian) "which confessedly, in its ordinary meaning, is not only alien, but hostile to the doctrines of Socialism."[1] Yet we hear on all sides every day that Socialism has its roots in Christianity!

To the lay mind it is surprising that any of the representatives of the Church should ally themselves with that which declares itself hostile and alien to Christianity.

Mr. Belfort Bax says: "In what sense Socialism is not religious will be now clear. It utterly despises the 'other world' with all its stage properties—that is, the present objects of religion."[2]

It is strange that Socialism should be able to boast that bishops, canons, deans, and others of lesser rank in the Church of Jesus Christ, look tolerantly on this, and favourably on the plans of its utterers!

The good of mankind is stated by the Christian Socialist to be the common object of Christianity and of Socialism and to form a common ground whereon Christians and Socialists stand together, and they assert that consequently Socialism springs from Christianity, and that Jesus Christ was a Socialist. It is

[1] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Socialism."
[2] "Religion of Socialism," pp. 52–53.

a roundabout way of reasoning, and the Church has been nearly two thousand years in finding out its Socialism.

The theory is a curious structure built upon false premisses. Temporal happiness and comfort, which is the object of Socialism, is not the object of Christianity, nor was it the object of Jesus Christ; nor was anything promoting it, or like it, ever preached by Him or His followers, but quite the opposite; nor has any such meaning ever been attached to His gospel before, nor can it be found there now.

The welfare of Humanity as Christianity has interpreted it to us, and the idea as Socialists present it to us, are wide as the poles asunder, and are as night is to day.

Moreover, if the welfare of Humanity (irrespective of any definition of this "welfare") is the object, was there ever yet a system that did not profess it? and does it make all systems one? The followers of Mahomet, and even savages of the most ferocious type, doubtless think it would be better for Humanity if their particular system were adopted by the rest of the world. If any of the promoters of such systems thought that our system, or any other known system, were better for men than their own, defection to such other superior system would no doubt be the consequence. Did not the Inquisition consider that it had the interests of mankind at heart? and did it not burn Jews and Moors by hundreds of thousands and hunt them over the world for their own welfare and for the sake of Humanity in general? These Spanish persecutors looked beyond the few and the present; they thought they saw further than others, and they said that what they did in their ferocious and abominable cruelty

was for the good of the world and the welfare of mankind.

The professed object of the Socialist and Inquisitor then is the same; but are Socialism and Romanism, or Socialism and the Holy Inquisition, the same? Are they allied? Can they walk hand in hand? Can they work together?

The measures taken by the Holy Office were not seen by Romanism to be antagonistic to human welfare. Holy Inquisitors did not talk about Humanity, it is true, but these awful benefits were conferred for the sake of the highest good of mankind on all those on whom they could lay their torturing hands, on all over whom Spain had any power, and there can be no doubt she would have extended them to the whole of Humanity if she could have done so. It avails not to accuse her of having profit, pecuniary, personal profit, at heart. Socialists do not for one instant deny that they have profit at heart also; and if they should deny it, it were futile, for it is made very clear in all their avowed plans that they have.

It cannot be asserted that because two systems, two antagonistic systems, profess the same object that they have their roots in, and spring from, the same source.

And Socialists indignantly repudiate the attribution which Christian Socialists persistently assign to their system. They deny that their object is that of the Christian, and that their system has anything in common with Christianity. And they ought to know.

Is it likely that Socialists will tolerate what they call "a bestial superstition pertaining to the worst side of paganism" in their midst? or a religion which has "rehabilitated the devil," and which they consider "hostile to the doctrines of Socialism"? or that they will allow

"a foul doctrine" to be "fulminated every week from a thousand pulpits"?

The truth is that the objects of Christianity and Socialism are not the same, nor even similar, and that Socialism does not spring from, and has not its root in Christianity.

The object of the Socialist (as he himself declares) is the mundane welfare, and only the mundane welfare, of mankind.

"Man, in judging of conduct, is concerned only with this present life. . . . Socialism arises from the recognition that the sole aim of mankind is happiness in this life. . . . Corporate Society—the State, not the personified Humanity of Positivism—becomes the centre of the Socialist's faith."[1]

The object of the Christian, as Jesus Christ declared, is not mundane but the eternal welfare of the soul. These objects, far from being one and the same, are diametrically opposed.

Jesus Christ said His kingdom was not of this world. The Socialist says there is no kingdom but this world. Jesus Christ bade us take no heed of what we ate and wherewithal we should be clothed. The Socialist makes no pretence of thinking of providing for anything but the material and sensual side of our nature; his whole care is for the things of this world and not for anything else whatsoever; he would resent the imputation of anything else as a slander. Man, he says, is concerned only with the present life; "he has to make it as full and joyous as he is able."[2] Where, then, is the common ground—the common object? And how can two systems so diametrically opposed to

[1] Karl Pearson, "Ethics of Free Thought," pp. 318–319.
[2] Ibid., p. 324.

each other in all that is vital have a common root or exist in the same soil?

"The doctrine of Social Democracy," says Professor Flint, "is based on a materialistic conception of the world. Its advocates assail belief in God and immortality as not only in itself superstition, but as a chief obstacle to the reception of their teaching and the triumph of their cause."[1]

Christian Socialists wish, for certain reasons, to ally themselves with Socialists, but Socialists repudiate them and their claim. They say we will not have anything to do with men who hold such a repugnant creed; we will not have the "gaunt spectre of Christianity" in our midst, nor any brotherhood with those whose doctrines are "alien and hostile" to our aims.

They do not intend fraternisation, nor to have any such retardative influence as that of the Church in their State. They know Christianity and Socialism cannot subsist together, and they do not pretend to devise any scheme for their co-existence; nor do they show any wish or intention to do so. They say: "The basis of the religion of Socialism consists in a sense of oneness with the social body."[2] Is that the basis of the Christian religion? "With the growing sense among all earnest men of social utility as the end of all human endeavour, an ethic based on the notion of individual likeness to God is in flagrant contradiction."[3] Is it so for the Christian—for the Christian Socialist?

"It is sometimes said that Socialism is neither religious not irreligious. This does not, or should not, mean that Socialism fails to come into contact with the views of the world and of life which the current

[1] "Socialism," p. 441. [2] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Socialism."
[3] Ibid.

religions furnish, or that at a particular stage in its progress it may not take up a position even of active hostility to those religions."[1]

Here active hostility is distinctly contemplated, should it be necessary; but Socialists believe that religion is dying out, if not practically already dead; that the lower classes (and these are the majority) are devoid of religion; that the literary, scientific, and artistic are equally devoid of it, not from want of time for thought, but for the very much more cogent reason that they have thought it out and decided against it; that the middle classes only keep up the appearance of it from stupidity, vulgar tastes, and habit; that the upper classes make a fashion of it from which they will depart less willingly than from their possessions, and that ecclesiastics themselves will only adhere to it as long as it is to their interest (which Socialism will quickly reverse) to do so.

Talent and learning may, as the Socialist thinks, be incompatible with religious belief or the continuance of it, but this idea does not receive much countenance from the fact that men of the highest intellectual rank, such as Cardinal Newman, Gladstone, and Arthur Balfour have been zealous in the defence of the impeached creed, which would seem to show that great power of intellect and high intellectual attainment are not incompatible with religious belief.

If, however, it be as stated, there is one very singular circumstance which remains to be accounted for: the enormous sums which are given voluntarily for the erection of churches and religious buildings and the maintenance of them and their ministrants. The maintenance of the Established Church either in Eng-

[1] Belfort Bax, "Religion of Socialism."

land or elsewhere may be struck off without any serious detriment to this sum, for not only is the balance left sufficiently large to indicate the sincerity of the subscribers to it, but the very persons who, if their hearts were not in the matter, would be most likely, not being burdened with a superfluity of wealth (if having to earn their bread be any criterion), to avail themselves for respectability's sake or for any other motive of the Church's ministrations which are provided for them, are those who refuse the churches maintained for the general use. Further, we have it on Socialistic authority that "to the one Secularist hall, or even Unitarian chapel, you have your thousand places of Anglican, Catholic, Presbyterian, Baptist, Wesleyan worship. The soil is productive of the one and barren of the other. To the thousands subscribed to a new chapel, you have your pence to a new Hall of Science."[1]

The middle and lower classes form the great bulk of those who voluntarily build their own churches and maintain their own ministrants, and if this does not denote that there would be insuperable reluctance to adopt any system unfavourable to the propagation of the tenets held it is difficult to know what proof of sincerity would be convincing. Yet the Socialist does not see it in this light; he says, "Unconscious humbug is an important ingredient of the Zeitgeist. The bourgeois respectability and pietism alike spring from roots hidden perhaps to himself, but none the less real, to wit, his own pocket, potential and actual, or the pocket of the class generally. He is acute enough to connect Atheism and Communism."[2]

It does not of course follow that Socialists will fail to win their way to power on this account; far from it,

[1] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Socialism." [2] Ibid.

for we see many of the clergy of all denominations (notwithstanding that the middle classes, as we are told, are "acute enough to connect Atheism and Communism") doing their best to bring people nearer to that which is correctly connected by them with Atheism; but it shows that Churchmen (who, it might be supposed, would have a keener eye than laymen to the tendencies of Socialistic doctrine in this respect) are blind to obvious facts, and are leading those they influence in the direction of a conflict which will be waged with all the bitterness which strife connected with religious questions inspires when the misguided or thoughtless awake to the real nature of their position.[1]

If, however, it be true that religion does not lie near to the hearts of the multitude, there will be less difficulty in instituting the new system, nor is there in this case any reason why Socialistic views on these points should be veiled; but there can be no doubt that a large minority of misled but very determined and staunch upholders of Christianity will remain to be dealt with after the new era has set in, and it would be important to them at least to know (seeing that all are to assist in the necessary work of the world and that perfect equality of circumstance and surroundings is to prevail) what provision and protection are to be furnished by Socialism for their churches, clergy, and religious educational establishments, or in what way they are to exist under the government of a system which

[1] "If Socialists so increase as to be able to elect a majority of the members of the House of Commons, the whole Socialistic programme may be constitutionally converted into law and constitutionally carried into effect at the point of the bayonet. Thus far Marx saw quite clearly. And possibly the time may come when the people of Britain will be so infatuated as to send to Parliament a Socialist majority."—*Flint*, "*Socialism*," p. 337.

denounces their creed as a "bestial superstition," and declares it retardative of progress and of the objects it means to attain; and it would be interesting to the nation generally to learn, since individual Christian ecclesiastics can throw in their lot actively, as they are doing, with the antagonisers of their creed, how it is they do not see that if Socialism is successful they will have led those to whom they minister into a position where there will certainly be the bitterest of struggles, unless they renounce the practice and propagation of their religion? We have it on the highest Socialistic authority that "the establishment of society on a Socialistic basis would imply the definitive abandonment of all theological cults."[1]

And in addition to this we learn that "Socialists have to inculcate that spirit which would give offenders against the State short shrift and the nearest lamp-post. Every citizen must learn to say with Louis XIV., 'L'Etat c'est moi.'"[2]

Are Christian Socialists, Bishops, Deans, and Canons, who tolerantly, nay, approvingly, consider Socialistic programmes and help forward the Socialistic movement, prepared to abandon all theological cults when they have helped the Socialist to power? And do they make this their intention known to those who sit under their ministry and look to them for guidance? Do they, while adding "Socialist" to their title of "Christian" and preaching Socialism on platform and in pulpit, also announce from their pulpits that "the establishment of society on a Socialistic basis would imply the definitive abandonment of all theological cults?"

[1] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Socialism."
[2] Karl Pearson, "Ethics of Free Thought," p. 324.

No, they do not. Yet they know, while associating themselves with Socialism, that this uprooting of all religion is what the Socialist is pledged to, and must (even were he not) carry out before he can establish that for which alone he is fighting, and that when he has conquered and attained his end he will not suffer the "gaunt spectre of Christianity" in his midst.

If Bishops, Deans, and Canons would only proclaim this in the pulpit and on the platform in the Socialist's own words; if they would only tell their hearers that Socialism calls the Christian doctrine "foul," they would be doing great good by this honest exposure of fact; but in seeking to sanctify and further Socialism by adding its terminology to their own and by working with, or trying to work with, Socialists and in considering and approving Socialistic programmes they are only helping the enemy of their faith and their religion to overthrow more swiftly (if but temporarily) their Church and their State.

It is the Christian Socialist who is giving the Socialist the help he needs in converting Christians to Socialistic doctrines by making these doctrines look fair and moral, and by declaring that they are derived from the Christian religion and from Christ Himself, but in doing this he misrepresents doctrines and objects which are hostile to the creed of those who look to him for guidance and who depend upon his judgment.

The Church, the religious world, have fair warning; they have nothing to reproach Socialists with in this matter; all Socialist authorities are here quite honest and frank:—

"We make war against all prevailing ideas of the State, of country, of patriotism. The idea of God is

the keystone of a perverted civilisation. It must be destroyed. The true root of liberty, equality, and culture is Atheism."[1]

This is the alpha and omega of Socialism, this is the inscription on its banner, and under this banner we must range ourselves as the Christian Socialist is doing, or we must show Socialism to be what it is and go out unflinchingly to fight and to conquer under our own Excelsior banner.

[1] Belfort Bax, "Ethics of Free Thought."

THE END

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